



## news

## significant shorts

## Woman arrested over river deaths of eight-year-olds

A woman who was looking after two eight-year-old girls when they drowned during a riverbank birthday barbecue has been arrested in connection with the investigation into their deaths, it emerged yesterday.

Detectives arrested the 40-year-old woman three days after Charles Fox and her best friend Jasmine Neville died in the River Wharfe in Otley, West Yorkshire. Yesterday police stressed that the deaths of the children, who got into difficulties as they paddled in the water, were not suspicious. It is understood that the woman, who was arrested on Thursday and taken to Westwood police station in Leeds, was questioned over allegations of neglect. She was later released on police bail.

The two girls, from Burley, Leeds, went to the beauty spot last Monday with six others, including Charles's parents, the woman who was arrested and her nine-year-old son, to celebrate Charles's birthday. During the evening the woman, who had been left in charge of the children, raised the alarm when she realised they had disappeared. An inquest into the deaths will open in Leeds this Monday.

## Schoolgirl beaten in changing room

A 14-year-old pupil was beaten and stamped on by two schoolgirls after winning three races in a sports day, it emerged yesterday.

On returning to the changing rooms at the Bowring Community College sports day in Bradford, Nicola Bowden found her clothes had been dumped in the toilet. She was then attacked by the girls. A 14-year-old girl held her down while her 11-year-old sister, who does not go to the school, kicked and stamped on her.

After the beating, Nicola was taken to Bradford Royal Infirmary with a fractured rib, internal bleeding and torn tissue in her lungs. She was detained at the hospital for five days and is now back at home she is still coughing up blood.

Nicola, who had won the relay, 400 metre and 200 metre races, is now terrified of returning to the school. She said: "We drove past the school on the way back from the hospital and my heart went cold. I can't go back there." Her father Vince, 37, said: "This is not bullying, this is GBH."

## Hindley painting prompts outcry



The mother of one of the Moors murder victims yesterday said she was seeking legal advice about the possibility of taking action to stop a "disgusting" portrait of Myra Hindley going on show. Winnie Johnson, mother of Keith Bennett, said she found it hard to believe that the Royal Academy was putting the huge picture - made up of thousands of handprints of a child - on public exhibition. Her view was supported by the Phil Wools.

Labour MP for the area around Saddleworth Moor where the children murdered by Hindley and Keith Brady in the Sixties were buried. He said he intended to write to the Royal Academy asking for the 11ft by 9ft portrait by artist Marcus Harvey to be withdrawn from the *Sensation* exhibition, which opens on 18 September in Piccadilly, London.

## Champagne con loses fizz

A company that tried to con gullible investors into thinking there was money to be made out of expensive Champagne has been closed by the courts at the request of the Department of Trade and Industry, it announced yesterday.

Forrester & Lamego, based in London, was taken to court by the DTI in February accused of selling low-grade Champagne and at inflated prices. It said the claims made by the company, which has also been declared insolvent, had now been proved to be "exaggerated and misleading".

The High Court heard the company had exploited fears of a pre-millennium Champagne drought to sell its products, and cheated thousands of customers in the process.

It also claimed to be a "vintner of distinction", whereas it was set up last year, and employed eight unskilled telesales staff.

Consumer Affairs minister Nigel Griffiths said it was "imperative" that companies trying to con the public knew that the DTI would be in hot pursuit. And he warned "hedging investors" not to be fooled by get-rich-quick schemes.

Those that have come to light recently include bogus ostrich farms and illegal lotteries similar to the pyramid selling schemes that brought Albania to the brink of collapse earlier this year.

## Hit-and-run driver jailed

A hit-and-run driver who left a young woman trapped in the wreckage of her car was jailed for seven years yesterday for causing death by dangerous driving.

Barry McGowan, who is unemployed, admitted causing the death of management trainee Juliet Wood near Bournemouth airport, Dorset in December last year. He also admitted driving while disqualified. Miss Wood, 20, died several days later at Southampton General Hospital from head injuries suffered in the head-on collision. Bournemouth Crown Court heard that McGowan, 37, of West Moors, Dorset, had been banned from driving for three years in October 1995.

On 9 December he borrowed his girlfriend's car and ploughed into Miss Wood's vehicle as he tried to overtake on a left-hand bend. He fled the scene and phoned his girlfriend, telling her to report that her car had been stolen. He was eventually charged after DNA tests on a blood sample he gave matched blood found on the driver's seatbelt buckle.

In his defence, the court heard that McGowan deeply regretted his actions and had suffered recurring nightmares since the accident. Jailing him and banning him from driving for 15 years, Judge Patrick Hooton said: "You took the life of a young girl and I take a very serious view".

## GP euthanasia inquiry on hold

A health authority inquiry into the conduct of a GP who admitted helping patients to die was yesterday put on hold pending a police investigation.

Dr Dave Moor has already been questioned by officials at Newcastle and North Tyneside Health Authority and was invited to make a voluntary statement to Northumbria Police.

Yesterday the man heading the health authority inquiry said a decision had been taken to await the outcome of the police investigation.

Dr Ian Spencer, head of primary care development, said he could not discuss what stage the inquiry had reached, saying "it would not be appropriate to make any comment at the present time". He added that Dr Moor would be interviewed again and the inquiry was not over.

The Newcastle GP was invited to make a police statement after he admitted helping up to 150 patients to die during his 30-year career, including two in the past week. He was consulting the Medical Defence Union before deciding whether to agree to the request.

## people



Michael Caine: Performance as FW De Klerk earned "Best Actor" nomination

## Apartheid drama brings Caine in from the cold

**M**ichael Caine, the veteran actor best-known as an ER special, where he starred as Duncan Stewart, a Scot involved in a tense armed robbery.

And Dame Diana Rigg, the former *Avenger*, was in the frame to be named best supporting actress in a mini-series or special, for her role as Mrs Danvers in *Colditz* TV's *Rebecca*, starring alongside Charles Dance and Amelia Fox, which, ironically, got a poor reception when it was broadcast in Britain.

The US also continued its love affair with British comedienne Tracey Ullman, who has won five Emmy awards in the past and was this year nominated for the outstanding performance in a variety or music programme. Her show, *Tracey Takes On...*, was also nominated for best variety music programme, and for outstanding art direction, costume design, directing, hairstyling and make-up.

Meanwhile, *Prize Suspect*, the ITV detective mini-series starring Helen Mirren, has been nominated for its third Emmy, as the British success at the Oscar-laden set to be continued in the small-screen equivalents.

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# End of the kibbutz dream

Only one camp remains from a total of 250

by Patrick Cockburn

Baram, northern Israel — "We changed because we were the last one left," says Yaacov Zohar, 67, as he laments the abandonment last month by his kibbutz at Baram after 50 years of one of the more radical social experiments of the twentieth century.

He adds: "We did not fail. It was a wonderful way of educating children."

Since 1949 the children of the kibbutz, the Israeli communal village, at Baram in northern Galilee have been reared together in special children's houses and not by their parents.

Tsvi Benayoun, the kibbutz's economic manager, says: "Children lived together and performed all activities together from the age of eight months until they entered the army.

"It was a long, sustained — and by no means unsuccessful — attempt to bypass the nuclear family as the centre of a child's life. Instead, children were expected to give their first loyalty, not to their parents, brothers and sisters, but to each other and to the members of the kibbutz as a group.

After prolonged and angry debate, Baram, a prosperous community of 566 adults and children just south of the border with Lebanon, last month became the last kibbutz out of some 250 in Israel — many of whom once brought up their children together — to abandon the system. For the first time this month the children sleep at home and the neat four-bed rooms in the children's houses are empty at night.

Many kibbutzniks argued against the decision, seeing it as a final surrender of the original ideal of the kibbutz, whereby property, work and living arrangements — including the rearing of children — were all organised collectively.

Mr Benayoun, 45, who voted for the change, says: "In future, the main



Social experiment - The end of communal care of children in kibbutzim is a blow for idealists

Photograph: Richard Nowitz/Colorific!

factor in the kibbutz will be the family."

Mr Benayoun said the main reason for returning children to their parents was "pressure" from the mothers. The children themselves said they wanted to be in the children's house". Mr Zohar, one of the founders of Baram 48 years ago, opposed the decision. Admitting that many parents wanted their children to sleep at home, he says: "Kids are not pets. You have to imagine what is best for the kids, not what is best for the parents."

The prestige of the kibbutz movement has fallen a long way since its height in Israel and abroad in the 1950s and 1960s. Started in 1909 by

socialist Zionists it was once seen as

producing the prototype Israeli

part pioneer farmer, part soldier

who lived in an egalitarian community and was ready for any sacrifice in pursuit of the common good. It was a Utopian vision with deep roots in the European intelligentsia which inspired generations of foreign teenagers to labour in kibbutz apple orchards for minimal return.

The reality was always different.

Many of the kibbutzim were built on land Palestinian farmers had worked on before. In 1949 Mr Zohar says he was brought to northern Galilee "although I had never seen a cow before". When he asked Israeli government officials how much land

he could have they told him: "As

much as you can see."

But there had been a Palestinian Baram, now a field full of ruins, with only its Maronite church surviving. Abu Yusuf, 85, recalls how as a young teacher he saw "the Israeli army come here and put a white flag on the church. Then they gave us 48 hours to leave the village for two weeks. We slept under the trees."

The Palestinians were never allowed to return. In 1953 they watched from a neighbouring hilltop as Israeli planes bombed their houses into rubble.

The problem for the kibbutz is that the system does not really work without the idealistic glue. Baram is

more successful than many other kibbutzim — half its activities are agricultural, but it also owns a successful plastics factory — in part because it has not tried so hard to adapt to the world outside. Other kibbutzim have introduced differential wages. At Baram everybody receives equal recompense.

Nevertheless, the decision at Baram to end communal care of children marks a critical moment. It shows the kibbutzniks no longer believe in their way of life and ideals should be a model for others.

"We have to follow the changes in the outside world," said one kibbutznik born at Baram. "We have lost our strength."

It worked, but there's simply less idealism around now,

From the time Ofra Yechieli was a baby until she was 18 years old, she lived in the children's house at Baram kibbutz and not in her parents' home.

"It worked for me," says Ms Yechieli, a university graduate. "I made friends who are closer to me than brothers and sisters. At the same time my relationship with my real sisters is not the same as it would have been if I had been brought up by my family."

Ms Yechieli, now aged 31, is still a member of the kibbutz, along with 10 out of the group of 16 children with whom she grew up. She is sad at the decision to end communal child-rearing at Baram, but considers it inevitable.

"The kibbutz has changed. There is less idealism in society. Television brought the world into the kibbutz. People wanted the experience of being parents — they felt they were missing something. If the parents do not support the idea then their children will worry."

Her own parents supported the communal rearing of the children. Most of the children liked it. Ms Yechieli points out that when Baram decided to end the system, the older children, who do not vote in the kibbutz assembly, "wanted to stay with the communal houses".

She says the way she was brought up gave children a sense of shared responsibility and control over their own lives.

There were disadvantages, however. Children with special needs might not get enough attention and feel "discarded, neglected by their parents". In later life they sometimes showed "less warmth, less showing of affection".

The decision to return the rearing of children to the nuclear family was unavoidable, Ms Yechieli believes. Baram was the last kibbutz in Israel to drop the old system. "People don't like to be different from others. Who were we to say the rest of the world was wrong?" At the same time, Ms Yechieli has no doubt about the consequences. The theory behind the kibbutz was the primacy of the group over individual interests. "Now the group will lose its place and the family in the home will gain primacy," she says. "The day of the kibbutz may be over."

**'You'll be working in bananas,' said the cross-looking blonde woman in scarlet hotpants**

Marcus Tanner recalls tense moments during his stay on a kibbutz



"You'll be working in bananas", they told me when I got off the bus at the kibbutz in northern Galilee. A cross-looking blonde Canadian woman in scarlet hotpants escorted me to my hut in the foreigner's end of camp. "You don't look Jewish," I ventured. "I'm a convert — I married one," she snapped. "Don't try going out of the kibbutz at night — there are terrorists out there".

I had arrived with a batch of German girls and a clutch of English nurses. The Germans talked of atoning for Nazi crimes. What did I want? Freedom, certainly — my first holiday on my own after leaving my stuffy school.

The German girls, who all seemed to be called Ulli, kept to themselves. They lowered their gazes and whispered when the kibbutz boys came past our row of "foreigners' huts" in the evenings, stripped to the waist, lolling over the handlebars of their bikes, beer bottles in hand, leering.

The British girls — pallid and drawn after arrival, bronzed and vibrant after only a few weeks — had a different agenda. Within two weeks, one of the nurses had got hitched to a real kibbutznik — a Jew from Manchester. We had spotted her sneaking into his hut at night. Her best friend, Lee, was livid. "Rotten cow," she told me, unable to hide her hopelessness.

I spent a lot of time with Lee, partly to avoid a big female soldier called Miriam who used to creep up behind me after our dinner in the communal dining hall and try and entice me back to her hut, which she shared with another big army girl, called Elin.

I felt sorry for Lee, who I knew was absolutely mortified by the triumphant smirk of her former friend. One of the few unmarried kibbutzniks soon spotted Lee had missed out; he offered to take us down a wadi to look for terapins, and then virtually told me to disappear: I could see him groping Lee's backside as he "helped" her over the boulders while I stumbled along furiously behind being bitten by mosquitoes.

Steve Boggan

village's parish council by election.

Officials set up a polling station at the local school, opened it at 8am on Thursday and sat down to wait for the first voter. And they waited. And waited.

"I couldn't believe it — when I opened the ballot box it was completely empty," said Steve Milton, the returning officer.

"At one point, the school

Banana republic: Foreign volunteers are part of the tradition of kibbutzim affiliated to the Israeli Labor party, and provide useful, cheap labour during harvests

The kibbutzniks looked on us with some suspicion. Foreign volunteers were part of the tradition of kibbutzim affiliated to the Israeli Labor party, as ours was; we reinforced that rather vague, but self-conscious spirit of internationalism they had inherited from those turn-of-the-century Socialist Zionist pioneers, whom the crabby Canadian woman sometimes lectured us about. "They weren't allowed to have anything private — not even a kettle," she once said proudly. (The other kibbutzniks women ignored her. Her chidlessness embarrassed them, it seemed). We were useful cheap labour: too, in the fish ponds, or hacking away at the undergrowth in the banana fields that sloped down to the sea of Galilee and the Jordanian border.

But some of them also thought the women volunteers were disruptive — just interested in having sex under the banana trees. I got sick of Lee going on about her friend's betrayal. She ditched the kibbutznik who took her down the wadi and after failing to get off with the American Jewish doctor — who publicly snubbed her in the communal dining room — she felt she just had to leave.

And when we all started talking in the evenings about the deserted Arab village that lay only a mile away — and started asking why it was deserted, some of the kibbutzniks got riled and called us "Arab-lovers". At the end of September, the wind started whistling round the doors of our huts. The bananas were harvested. It was time to go.

**Election where nobody voted**

caretaker came in and the presiding officer encouraged him to use his vote — but he said he couldn't be bothered.

"I've heard of some pretty poor turnouts before, but it's the first time I've heard of no one voting at all."

Fortunately, for the candidates, the parish had two polling stations and the second booth attracted a small number of voters, returning the independent

candidate Godfrey Burt. Even so, the turnout was just 5.8 per cent.

"The area where nobody voted is covered mostly by the Bulford army training camp, so perhaps they are not so concerned with local issues," said Mr Milton by way of explanation for the democratic apathy.

Or perhaps they were all busy training for the real battlefield.

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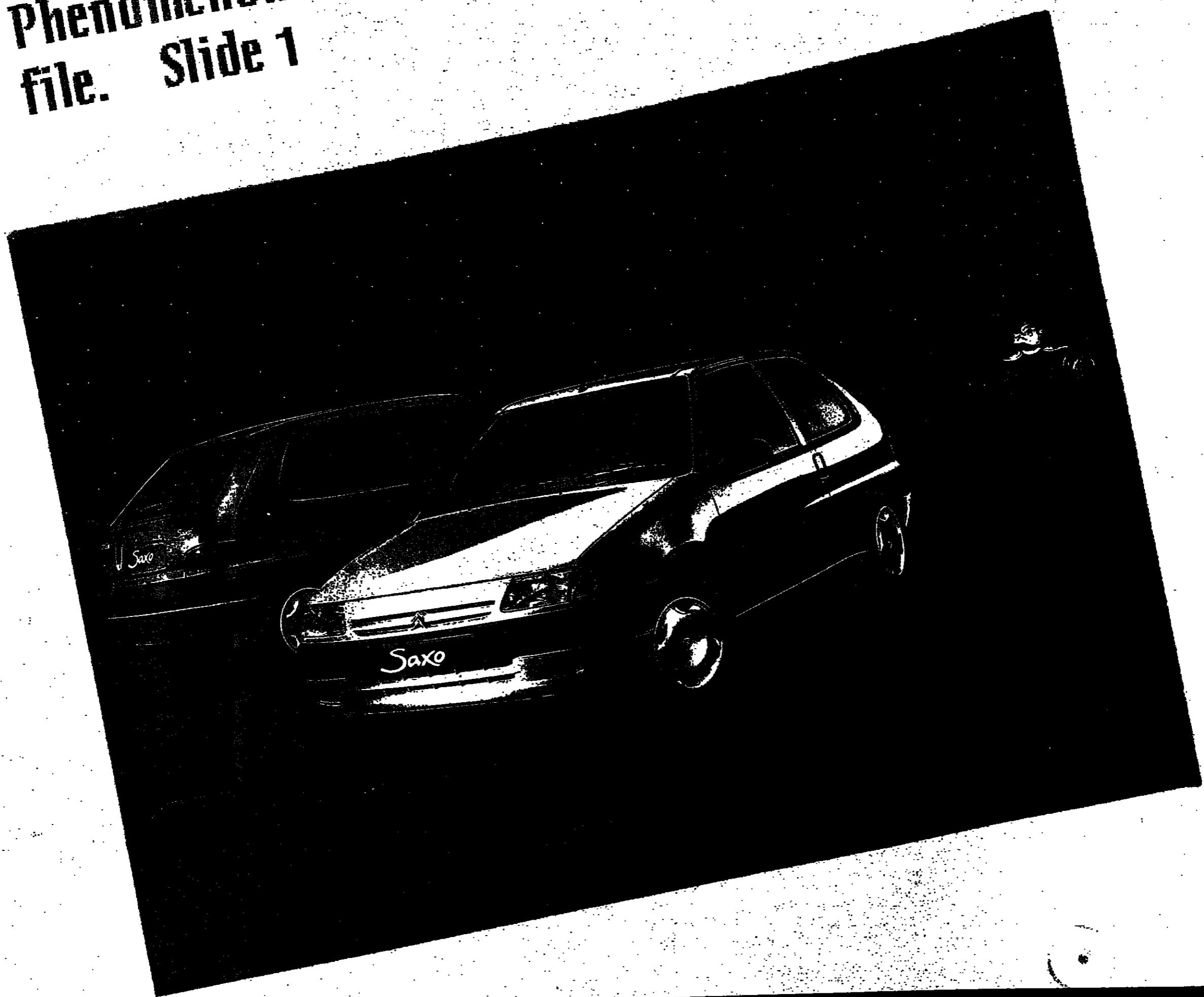
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# The priest who brought down a government

Twelve years for paedophile in Irish scandal

Alan Murdoch  
Dublin

The paedophile priest whose case brought down the Irish government was yesterday jailed for 12 years after a Dublin court heard harrowing details of his victims suffering over a 36-year period.

Brendan Smyth, 70, a member of the Norbertine order, pleaded guilty to 74 charges of abusing 20 children, some as young as six, in an abbey, a boathouse and a Dublin hotel, between 1959 and 1993.

In 1994 the Irish coalition government, led by Albert Reynolds, collapsed amid uproar over the revelation that the Attorney General's office had failed to act on extradition applications for Smyth's return to face charges in Northern Ireland.

Church authorities also came under strong criticism for moving Smyth to new parishes when abuse complaints emerged. In July 1994 the priest was jailed for four years in Belfast for eight child sex-abuse offences. The following year he received an additional two-year term on eight further charges. On his release in Northern Ireland in March this year he was extradited to the Irish Republic.

The latest sentence followed a two-day hearing in Dublin's Circuit Criminal Court in which Judge Cyril Kelly heard details of the suffering of 20 of Smyth's female and male victims. One woman described how, as a child, she woke up on one occasion feeling a sharp pain, to find



Facing judgment: Brendan Smyth being led into a court in Dublin this week; he was yesterday sentenced to 12 years in prison

Photograph: Steve Humphreys/ Irish Independent

Smyth's finger in her vagina. Smyth's assaults drove her to attempt suicide, three months after giving birth, and her marriage ended six months later.

Another woman, now a nurse, told of being repeatedly abused in a convent parlour.

Her school uniform had been

trusted enough to let him take it. The next day she had been humiliated and beaten in school because of the semen stains. When the girl refused to see Smyth again, the Mother Superior told her she was "above her station" and slapped her before making her see him.

The girl later turned to drugs as a result of her ordeal. She attempted suicide by swallowing needles, and said that much of her adolescence was spent looking for pills with which to kill herself.

Detective Inspector Thomas Dixon told the court that Smyth had

shown no remorse. DJ Dixon agreed that some victims who had refused to go on further trips with Smyth had relented to prevent younger brothers and sisters being abused also.

One male victim told the court: "I hate Smyth so much I could kill him." In court on Tuesday Smyth read

out an apology recognising that his actions were "sins against God, offences against individuals and the laws of the state". He said he regretted any trauma his victims may have suffered.

Judge Kelly said, because of psychiatric reports and because of the priest's conduct during a sex-offenders' treatment programme in Northern Ireland, he feared Smyth would seriously sexually abuse again.

The judge also cited Smyth's behaviour during prison van journeys through Coleraine, when the priest became sexually excited at the sight of schoolchildren. He refused leave to appeal.

■ The Catholic Church in England and Wales was yesterday confident that strict guidelines on investigating claims of sexual abuse by priests would prevent the English Church being hit by a huge damages payout similar to one facing an American diocese. The Roman Catholic diocese of Dallas was ordered to pay \$120m (£75m) damages to 10 former altar boys, and to the parents of another youngster, who were sexually abused by a Catholic priest. A jury in the civil case found the diocese guilty of not only failing to uncover the Rev Rudolph Koc's 11-year reign of abuse, but also of covering up the evidence when victims finally came forward.

A number of priests have been convicted in Britain of sexual abuse of young boys over the past few years but no victim has ever brought a civil damages claim to court. If a diocese was sued, then a victim would have to prove that the Church had actually been negligent in that it had covered up what had happened.

Father Kieran Conry, of the Catholic Media Office, said the Church was alert to any possibility of sexual abuse by priests and was doing all it could to stamp it out.

## Clever ruse to avoid paying bungalow bill

Alexandra Williams

For Gerry Balmora, an Englishman's bungalow is his castle. When he fell behind with his mortgage repayments banking officials strode in and repossessed his property. But, they failed to realise that Wimborne House has a most effective moat and access would entail one of two things ... hiring a helicopter or taking up pole vaulting.

Mr Balmora's daughter owns the land surrounding the house and is steadfastly refusing to give anyone permission to cross it.

The powers-that-be at the Bank of Scotland are now embroiled in a legal battle to try and gain access to the house they own - estimated to be worth £250,000.

The four bedroom stone-fronted house, complete with sauna, was built by Mr Balmora in 1984, on land at his bungalow's yard near Alnwick Moor in Northumberland.

"I suppose in a way you can

say we are having the last laugh at the moment," said Mr Balmora. "But in reality this is not that funny. We were kicked out of our house four days before Christmas, even though we pleaded for one last Christmas there."

"They have acted like shits ever since. We didn't start this. When we went to re-mortgage the house the bank didn't do the proper searches to see if there were any restrictions with the property and there were 18 in all. They are left with a house they can't sell and it's their fault."

"We won't give up the access because we don't want to see someone else living in the house we worked so hard to build."

Alan Scouller, a spokesman for the Bank of Scotland, said: "We have rightfully obtained possession of the property and are seeking to realise that security for a debt. There are some planning conditions which are unduly onerous which are preventing us from proceeding."

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# Police defend 'blacked-up' identity parade

Jason Benetto

Crime Correspondent

The police force which "blacked-up" eight white men in an identity parade with a black suspect yesterday defended their action and argued that it was difficult to find ethnic minority volunteers in the north of England.

South Yorkshire police were widely criticised after it emerged that the faces of the white men were painted by a make-up artist in an attempt to make them look like the defendant. Their hands, however, were left white.

The blackmail case involving the black man at Sheffield Crown Court was dismissed on Thursday after judge Michael Aspinwall described the identifications procedures as "a farce".

South Yorkshire police said yesterday that they had successfully used a make up artist on a number of occasions to alter skin tones.

They said they could not find any volunteers in Sheffield to appear in an ID parade that looked like the suspect, Martin Kamara, who is 6ft 3, weighs 16 stone and is black and bald.

They contacted the police in Bradford, Leeds and Newcastle for alternative volunteers, but failed to find any.

Rosie Winterton, Labour MP for Doncaster central, said yes-

terday that the system "undermined" confidence in the police and described it as a "completely ludicrous procedure".

Tim Hollis, Assistant Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police, said: "We take great pride in our ID parades."

"We acted in good faith, albeit the officer in the case was misguided in trying too hard and naturally, we will be reviewing our procedures accordingly."

He added: "Checks were made with banks of volunteers force wide and a search was made as far north as Newcastle without success."

"Knowing that the [make-up] artist had been successful in altering skin tones previously, 15 white volunteers of similar height and build were brought in to help."

The solicitor and his client examined the line-up at some length but conceded that it was not a fair likeness. We acted in good faith and tried something which did not work. But we got it wrong trying to be as fair as we could to provide the right level of evidence."

Martin Kamara, 43, an engineer of Wheatley, Doncaster, was to plead not guilty to blackmailing a financial adviser. His solicitor had objected to the white volunteers provided by the police and Mr Kamara was eventually positively identified in

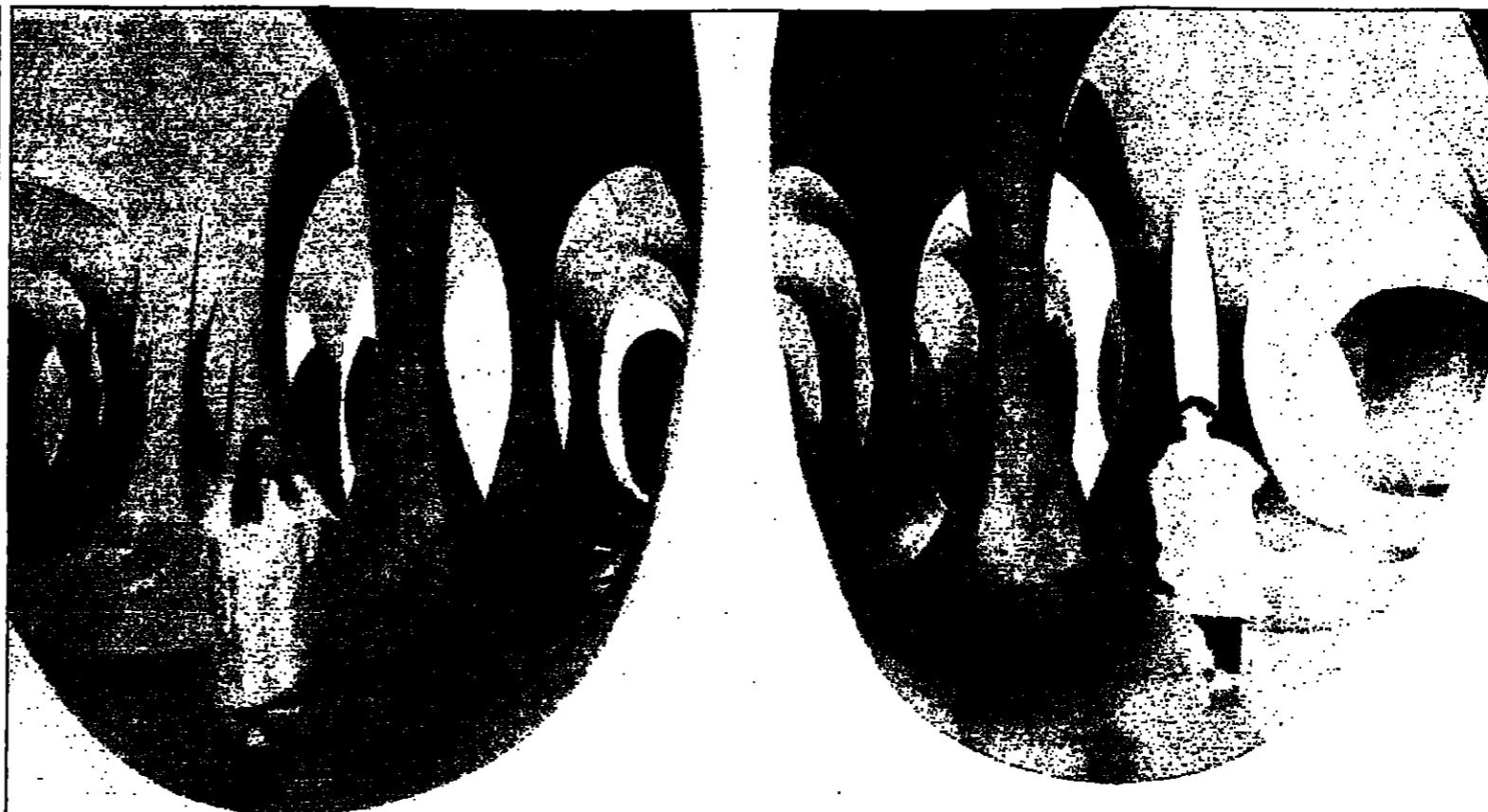
a "one man" line up, which are not considered very reliable.

After hearing details of the identity parade in pre-trial submissions, the judge ruled that Mr Kamara should be discharged. The judge said: "It's a farce when the faces of white men are painted black for an identity parade."

"Ethnic origin is not only to do with colour, it is to do with other features."

Mr Kamara said yesterday: "The [police] were racist in an ignorant sort of way, not a bigoted sort of way."

"There was no way that the identity parade could have been fair—I would have stood out like a sore thumb."



Sensory adventure: Viewers exploring Dreamsphere at Shepherd's Bush Green in west London yesterday, where artist Maurice Agis has filled a giant inflatable bubble with a kaleidoscope of colour and composer Stephen Montague has set it pulsing with sound. Photograph: Rebecca Naden



Journey's end: Mike Grindley (right) back at GCHQ

## After 14 years GCHQ staff go marching back in

Barrie Clement

Labour Editor

They were 20 minutes late for work. The trade-union heroes who had spent nearly 14 years campaigning to get their jobs back at the top secret Government Communications Headquarters failed to turn up on time for their momentous journey through the gates.

It was the fault of the photographers who insisted on several "walk-ins" before the nine GCHQ refuseniks got it right. There were also the glasses of bitter to be emptied at the nearby Hewlett Arms where assorted trade unionists foregathered for the occasion and eventually trickled in ones and twos towards the main GCHQ gate 200 yards away.

There were no bands, little in the way of popular tumult, although several union banners made an appearance.

This was the great symbolic occasion for those who refused to give up their union membership despite the insistence of the Thatcher government in 1984. It was an opportunity for them to thumb their noses at Baroness Thatcher.

In fact, the unions had agreed the event should be "understated". David Omand, director of the communications centre, had counselled that a triumphant return of trade unionism to the Cheltenham-based listening centre, would not go down well with existing staff.

Having finally negotiated the gates with refusenik Mike Grindley to the fore, the returnees, along with assorted civil service union bigwigs, were taken by transit van to the centre of the complex. There they encountered a strangely different atmosphere to the one they left more than a decade ago. There was tea and tickles and a presentation by Mr Omand, who told them that the end of the Cold War meant that

the main emphasis of the electronic snooping at the centre had now changed from countries with which the United Kingdom disagreed politically to international criminals.

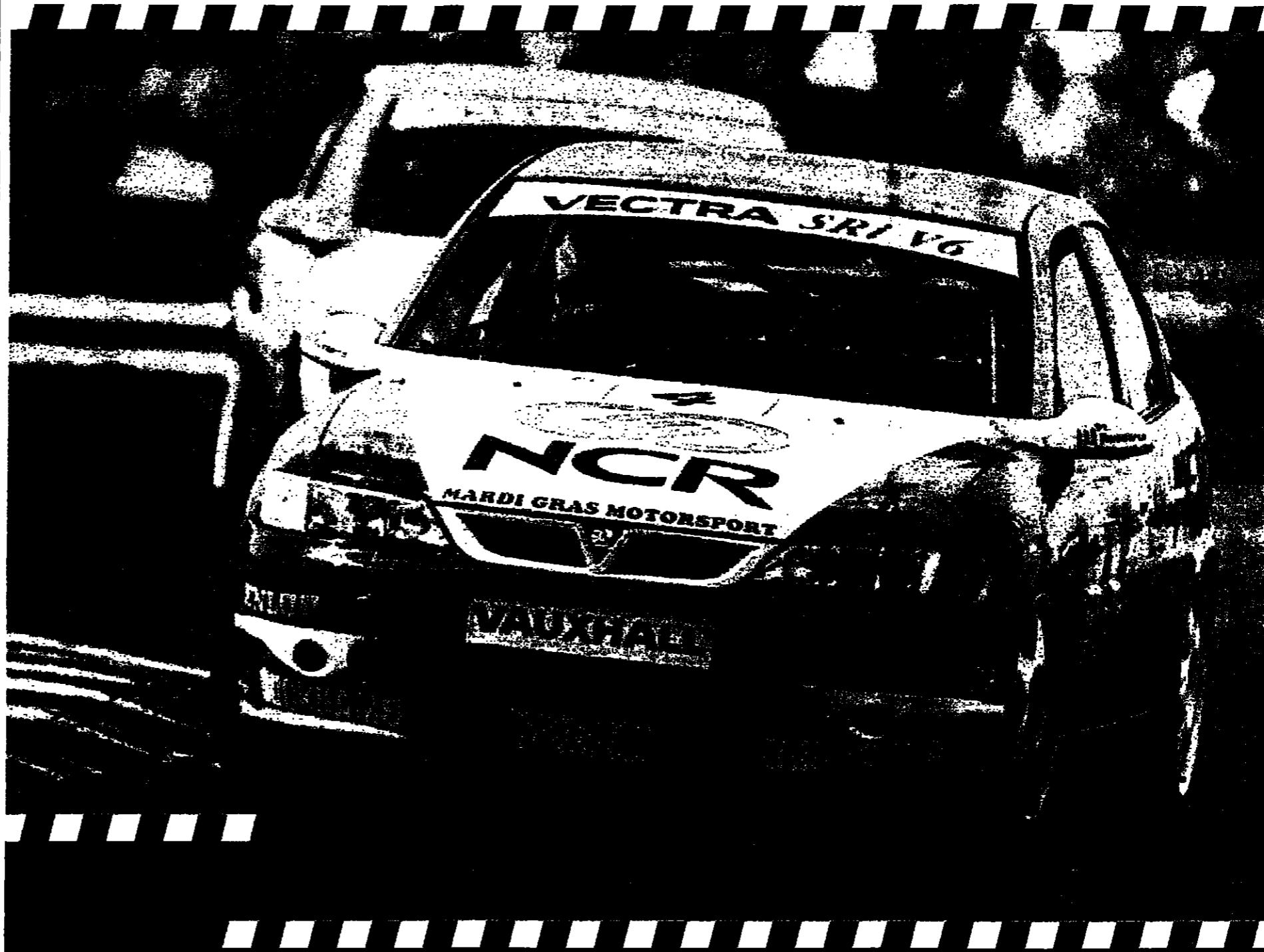
In a previous meeting with union leaders, the director had even suggested that he would encourage his employees to become members of the PTC civil service union which the old parish staff association recently voted to join.

Mr Grindley, an expert in Mandarin, who is presumed to have monitored the military and diplomatic conversations of the Chinese, noted that the director could not bring himself to apologise for the ban and neither could any of his lieutenants. Nevertheless, Mr Grindley admitted that he was amazed that the day had finally arrived. "After so many years arguing the case with anyone prepared to listen, I feel elated. The people in GCHQ were very welcoming and very civilised."

John Sheldon, general secretary of the PTC and one of those who accompanied the returnees through the gates, was determinedly upbeat about the day. "The stir that unions would somehow damage national security has been lifted from ordinary working people and I think that's wonderful."

There was a nagging doubt among other trade unionists present at what will be seen as a rather esoteric little gathering. The Labour Party has met its pledge to allow unions back into GCHQ, but there are infinitely more sensitive decisions being sought from the Government by the union movement.

It was relatively easy to allow a few union members back into GCHQ and even to recognise their organisation. The big prize for trade unions will be the eventual introduction of legislation enforcing union recognition where more than half of any workforce votes for it.



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news

# Back to bronze age for Swampy's friends

Clare Garner

A sense of foreboding looms over Lyminge Forest. The bailiffs could be in on Monday and the unspoiled Kent haven of natural beauty and site of ancient settlements may be buried for ever.

The "tree people", living much as one would imagine their ancestors did four thousand years earlier, are putting the finishing touches to their fortresses. Naturally, there is always more they could do - more tunnels, more tree-houses, more fences - but for now they must secure what they have and hold their nerve.

A clutch of agitated archaeologists stand on the sidelines, returning time and time again

to evidence marshalled over the past few years which to their minds spells out why Rank Organisation's proposals for an Oasis holiday village in West Wood should have been stoned out at the start.

Janine Roberts, who cycled in the forest as a child, quoted Brian Philp, a member of the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit,

who wrote to complain that the archaeological assessment carried out in 1994 was "ill-conceived" and yielded results which were "not valid". He concluded: "Your claim that none of the new sites is of particular significance is quite frankly misleading. All are important and the Bronze Age settlement site is exceptionally

rare in Kent and will, of course, be destroyed by your scheme."

Meanwhile, as the protesters tunnel, they discover what they believe to be Neolithic flint tools. Such finds spark hope - as does the news that Rank's share price is plummeting.

Final arrangements include

an outing into Canterbury to stock up on food supplies and discussing ways of attaching themselves to "lock-ons" with minimum risk of injury. Aloft the Kookaburra Tree, sisters Scaz and Munch say: "Most of the work is done. We're ready."

Their friend, called Granny on

account of her expertise in tying knots, is bracing herself for the battle. "My biggest fear is claustrophobia and I'm locking myself in a tunnel," she said.

At the end of the evictions the protesters intend, as Crystal Chandelier put it, "to leave only footprints and take away

memories". Sadly, Rank's plans are rather different.

West Wood, which is carpeted with bluebells in spring and is host to a number of indicator species, belongs to the Forestry Commission and any member of the public can roam freely in the designated Area of

Outstanding Natural Beauty. If Rank has its way, the natural habitat will soon be supplanted by a 3,400 capacity car-park, 750 holiday homes, a nine-hole golf course, an artificial lake and other "attractions".

One of the protesters' camps

is actually built in an area car-marked by Rank as a "wooded area". A strange place for the protesters to wage their campaign? No. It is very shrewd. For Rank cannot afford to ravage that particular section of the forest, which means that the job of evicting the protesters will be all the more difficult.

**Earthworks: The protester Andy digging under West Wood in Lyminge Forest, where tunnellers have found what they believe are Neolithic flint tools**

Photograph: Tom Pilston

## Jails crisis forces rethink

Jason Bennett  
Crime Correspondent

The Government is to shelve plans for tough new sentences for repeat burglars as part of a package of measures aimed at stemming the escalating prison population.

The need for action was undermined yesterday with the publication of a Prison Service audit that warned that the jail system was at risk of running out of control because of overcrowding.

The rising jail population in England and Wales, which is expected to produce a shortfall of about 3,000 places by spring

1999, has become Jack Straw, the Home Secretary's first crisis. On Thursday, he announced a £43m emergency cash injection to help ease the over-crowding.

Next week, he will announce that he will delay the implementation of new powers for automatic three-year minimum sentences on third-time burglars. This measure, which was expected to be introduced in 1999, would have resulted in the jailing of an extra 8,000 prisoners up until 2011. The power, already among the provisions of the Crime (Sentences) Act, will now have to

wait until extra finances are available.

He will give the go-ahead for the introduction of automatic life sentences for second-time rapists and serious sexual and violent offenders, along with automatic seven-year sentences for third-time dealers in hard drugs. These measures will become law in the autumn.

The Prison Service audit, ordered by Mr Straw following Labour's election victory, says these new sentences for the more serious offences would only add about 170 to the prison population by the end of the century. But warned that the

last three months of the year will help lower the prison total, which is about 62,200 and rising by about 250 a week. He said yesterday that the prison population had risen by 2,500 since the general election - "the equivalent of five prisons over the last three months".

## EU denies deal on fish quotas

Katherine Butler  
Brussels

A European Union "deal" over Britain's complaints on fish quota-hopping, lauded by Downing Street as a victory for the Prime Minister after last month's Amsterdam summit, was little more than a public relations sham, according to senior Brussels officials.

They confirmed that Spain's foreign minister, Abel Matutes, has been told in a letter from the European Commission President, Jacques Santer, that no "deal" was done with Tony Blair at Amsterdam. The letter

to Madrid explains that Mr Santer advised Mr Blair of the longstanding legal remedies open to all EU governments for dealing with quota-hopping.

Last night, EU officials said that these remedies, which could involve putting the onus on Spanish boats registered in Britain to prove the existence of an economic link with the country for example by landing a percentage of their catch in United Kingdom ports, were well known to the previous British government. There was never at any stage an offer of additional concessions made to Mr Blair.

They also revealed that de-

spite the fuss made about quota-hopping at Amsterdam, the Government has remained silent on the issue ever since.

"The ball is in London's court. We have outlined the possibilities, but we have heard absolutely nothing from them since then. They should in the

ory have launched consultations with the UK fishing industry but we have heard nothing," said a senior official.

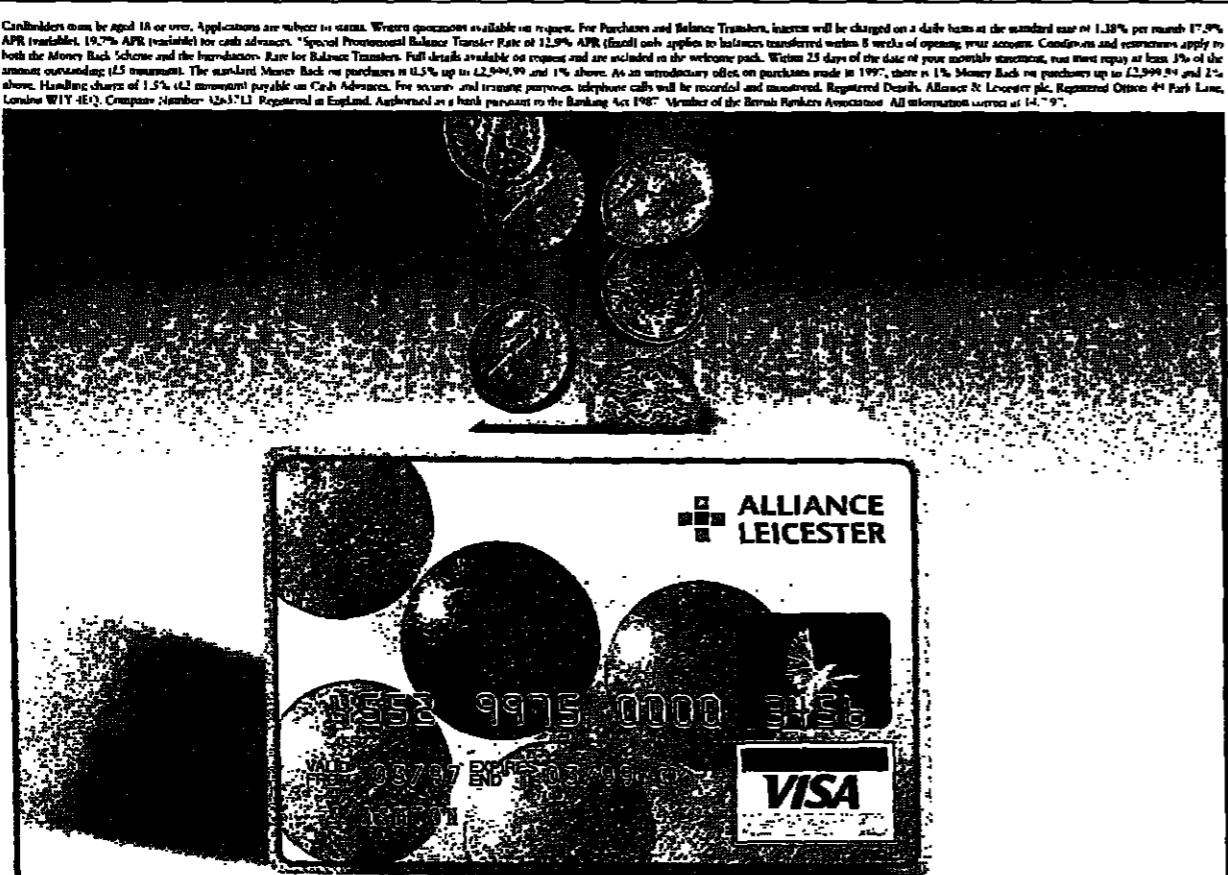
Another source dismissed British efforts to present last month's discussions between Tony Blair and Mr Santer as "blatant media manipulation".

Mr Blair's press officer Alastair

Campbell is said to have telephoned a number of journalists covering the Amsterdam summit to "leak" details of the so-called deal.

The official said the British government could introduce rules to force Spanish boats to establish an economic link with Britain.

But they could not be discriminatory and Scottish fishermen could be expected to resist any change in the law which, although designed to stamp out quota-hopping would have the effect of banning them from landing their catches in French ports.



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# DON'T LOOK THE OTHER WAY.

Every twenty one seconds, somewhere in the world, a refugee is created when someone is driven by fear to leave their home. Every refugee is the consequence of a government's failure to protect human rights. Every one of us bears the responsibility for these failures. Yes, all of us.



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Sallay Goba is a grandmother. But when an armed group attacked her village and murdered her grandchildren, her husband and son-in-law, her status was reduced to that of a statistic.

She became just one more of the world's millions of displaced people. Sallay fled her home and found shelter in another village. But a year later that village was also attacked. Sallay's hands were severed and tied to her elbows with string. With her hands went any slim chance Sallay may have had of returning to a normal life.

Sallay would have had a better chance had she fled her home country, Sierra Leone. It would be nice to think that if she had managed to reach Britain, we would have helped her.

Unfortunately, thousands who do manage to flee their home countries, seeking refuge from persecution like that suffered by Sallay, find no welcome in the West.

Instead they may be branded economic migrants, or bogus asylum seekers. To read the rantings of some British newspapers, you'd imagine that people like Sallay have brought terrible calamities upon themselves for the sole purpose of defrauding the British taxpayer.

Listen, Sallay did not ask for men to come and kill her husband, son-in-law and grandchildren. Do you imagine that she enjoyed being driven from her home, alone, penniless and terrified? Did she ask for her hands to be hacked off?

#### The story of Marie, an ordinary woman.

Marie was a chemist. She and her husband lived in Kinshasa where he was active in Zaire's democratic opposition. At 2am on 8 August 1993, soldiers broke down the door to Marie's house. Inside they found Marie, her husband, his mother and brothers. They seized her husband. When they assaulted Marie, her brothers-in-law intervened and were shot dead. Five or six soldiers took turns to rape Marie. She lost consciousness. When she awoke, she found that her husband had been taken away by the soldiers. He has never been seen since.

Marie was urged by friends to flee. Her employer arranged for her to travel by car and boat to the north, where she could catch a plane out of Zaire. In great pain, with no idea of where she was going, she boarded an aircraft which brought her to Heathrow. Here, not knowing where she was or what she should do, Marie was found wandering the corridors in a state of extreme traumatisation. Distraught and incoherent, she could not explain where she had come from, how, or why.

When, eventually, she was able to apply for political asylum, it was refused.

The Home Office ignored the appeals adjudicator's plea for compassion and prepared to deport Marie back to Zaire. To escape what might easily have turned out to be a death sentence, Marie was forced 'underground'. Finally, after a year in hiding, the Home Office relented and gave her leave to remain for a further year.

#### The war on refugees.

The odds in Britain, as in most other European countries, are massively stacked against asylum seekers.

Such is the media onslaught against people who have lost everything and suffered unimaginable griefs, that even people who usually think of themselves as caring, excuse their lack of compassion by saying, "It's tragic, but is nothing to do with us."

So sorry, but it is.

People like Marie have a guaranteed right under the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees to seek refuge in a safe country, if they have a "well-founded fear of persecution".

Was Marie's fear well-founded? You decide.

The United Kingdom, like all other European nations, has signed the UN Refugee Convention binding it to accept refugees and help them.

Should the British Government honour this commitment? You decide.

#### Every refugee is created by our failure.

The simple fact is that every single refugee is a direct consequence of a failure of government.

If each government obeyed its own laws and honoured the UN Declaration of Human Rights which all have signed, there would be no refugees.

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People don't want to be homeless any more than you do — they don't want to be tortured, murdered or raped any more than you do. They want to be offered a safe haven, as much as you would if you and your family were fleeing for your lives.

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## international



Fowl weather: An evacuee in Wiesensau, where flood defences crumbled  
Photograph: AP

## I'll drown with my village

Imre Karacs

The heavens opened up above the Oder yesterday, compounding the misery of thousands of people already exhausted from their battle against the flood of the century. As the rain pounded rescue workers on the banks, the river broke through the dykes in three places, forcing the evacuation of 10,000 people and their livestock.

Aurith, a hamlet 20 miles downstream from the confluence of the Oder and the Neisse, was inundated for the second time. Inhabitants of Wiesensau and Ziltendorf near by were also asked to leave, as river defences were crumbling. Officials set up emergency shelters in schools and gym halls in villages still on dry land, but many villagers refused to leave their homes and tried to save them by piling up yet more sandbags. Many clung to their houses, surveying the new waterworld from the top floor of their damp property, because of a widespread fear of looting.

"I'll drown with the village," said Rainer Bublak, mayor of Wiesensau. Several hundred extra police and border guards were dispatched to the area to protect property. They pledged to patrol the ghost villages night and day.

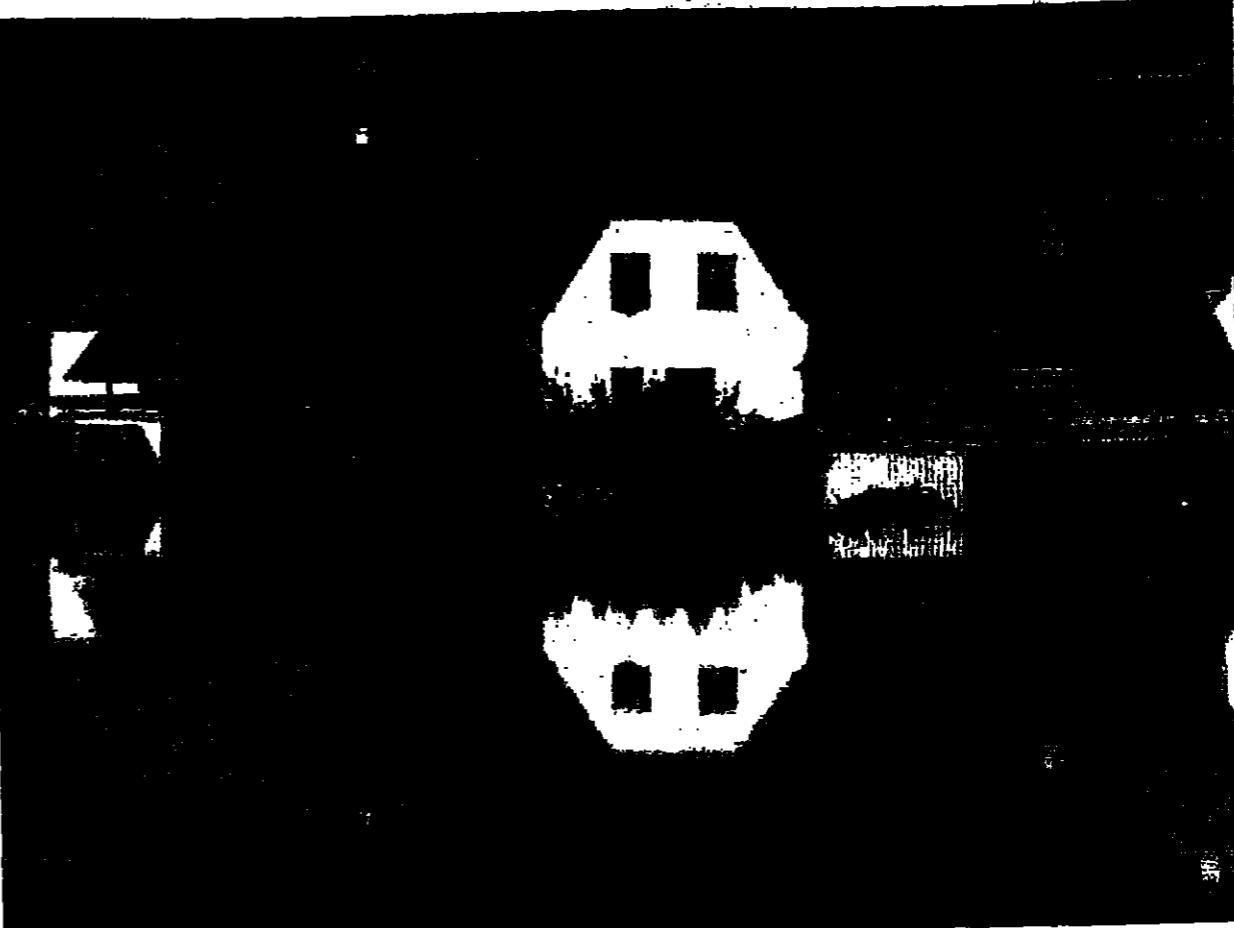
In Brieskow, which lies 7m (21ft) below the crest of the waves, the authorities had been trying since morning to persuade residents to leave. Appeals were broadcast, church bells rang out, sirens wailed. Nevertheless, some people were still there last night.

Rescue workers did better in Ziltendorf, where the danger was imminent.

"The evacuation is proceeding in an orderly manner," said Manfred Krothe, a spokesman of the Brandenburg regional government. But he admitted "many families at first bring only their children to safety".

Downstream, in Frankfurt an der Oder, the dykes were holding but beyond it the situation grew critical. A makeshift wall of sandbags collapsed north of Frankfurt, deluging fields in the Oderbruch. This region is the most vulnerable section of the river in Germany, home to 19,000 people.

The breach relieved pressure for the moment on the barriers but if more rain comes the whole area will be evacuated. In Poland and the Czech Republic, where the waters of the Oder originate and have already claimed more than 100 lives, it was raining too yesterday.



Waterworld: The village of Wiesensau, where emergency shelters were set up in gyms and schools. However, many residents refused to leave and took to the roofs of their properties, for fear of looting  
Photograph: Reutes



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الآن من الأصل

## Germans say Nein to more EU costs

Anger at paying lion's share puts pressure on other member states

Imre Karacs

Germany's flaws. "The aim is a fairer distribution of the burden among the EU member states," Mr Kinkel said.

Some of the expenses, argues the German government, are understandable, because Germany is partly compensated by hidden gains. Mr Kinkel said Germany would always pay more than other members: it was the main beneficiary from the EU's single market - the destination for 75 per cent of German exports.

Citing statistics produced by the European Commission, the respected financial daily *Handelsblatt* reported that 81.9 per cent of net contributions to the community had originated in Germany last year. The previous estimates had put the German share of the common burden to between 50 and 60 per cent.

But, according to *Handelsblatt*, this does not take account of costs associated with agricultural surpluses, and lost customs revenue, diverted from national capitals to Brussels. If these are taken into account, then three EU member states are revealed to be the biggest net contributors.

Others in this unlucky group are the Netherlands with 9.3 per cent of net contributions, and Sweden with 4.1 per cent. Most of the rest, including Britain, France and Belgium, are net gainers.

Reaction to these statistics was swift. "This sensational high net share shows even more clearly that German EU contributions have to be reduced," said Ingrid Matthäus-Maier, the Social Democrats' budget spokeswoman.

While the finance ministry in Bonn questioned the accuracy of the latest estimates, there was no disputing the sentiment that Germany was paying too much for European solidarity.

"Germany's net contributions have got out of proportion in the last few years," Klaus Kinkel, the foreign minister, admitted last week, adding that the government and parliament were trying to correct the sys-

tem's flaws. "The aim is a fairer distribution of the burden among the EU member states," Mr Kinkel said.

Some of the expenses, argues the German government, are understandable, because Germany is partly compensated by hidden gains. Mr Kinkel said Germany would always pay more than other members: it was the main beneficiary from the EU's single market - the destination for 75 per cent of German exports.

But there is a limit, even the patience of Bonn's Europhiles. With budgets having to be cut everywhere, mainly to help launch European money union, the DM140bn (£46bn) net cost of German membership in the EU between 1991 and 1996 ranked.

The Germans are rich, but not that rich. Countries such as Denmark and Luxembourg were well ahead of Germany in the league table of wealth, already richer still by German standards.

Aware of increasing hostility to all things European, the government is beginning to act.

With the prospect of new, poorer, countries joining the EU, a reform of the community's budget is inevitable.

The German proposals call for a redistribution of member-countries' payments in line with their GDP.

The current rich beneficiaries - Luxembourg, Denmark and Belgium - would have to start pulling their weight. The contributions of Britain, France and the Netherlands would be raised.

Not surprisingly, Bonn's ideas of reform has not gone down very well in Brussels or in the capitals' hardest hit.

But the German cry of "We want our money back" will not be silenced. Even if, as a German commentator lamented yesterday, "there is no Margaret Thatcher in Bonn".

## significant shorts

### Israelis snatch Palestinian

Israeli undercover forces kidnapped a suspect from an autonomous Palestinian enclave for the first time since their establishment under the Oslo accords. The arrest of Ghassan Mahdawi, alleged to be a member of Islamic Jihad, who tunneled out of an Israeli prison in 1996, is another sign that Israel is limiting the degree of autonomy of the enclaves.

Patrick Cockburn - Jerusalem

### Fifa to probe Uday 'caning'

Football's world governing body, Fifa, is investigating reports that Uday, President Saddam Hussein's eldest son, had the Iraqi team caned after it failed to qualify for the World Cup in France next year. A Fifa spokesman said it was taking the accusations against President Saddam's son extremely seriously.

AP - Zurich

### Brazil march against market

Left-wing parties and trade unions called for nation-wide protests in Brazil against the government and its reformist, free-market policies.

Reuters - São Paulo



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# In Florida, escapist fantasy can swamp reality

**E**astbourne with alligators: why is Florida the place to escape to? Tracey Whalin and her son's 14-year-old friend are not the first runaways to seek to get away from humdrum reality in this fantasy paradise of permanent sunshine. But why should this particular swamp serve as the Never-Never Land of so much of the world's collective dreams?

Mrs Whalin was following the rather more arduous journey made by Juan Ponce de León in 1513, in his quest for the Fountain of Youth. He did not find it, unsurprisingly, and died in the attempt. At least her quest only ended in leg-irons at Monroe County Detention Centre.

Escapism is a strong human impulse. Most people nurture dreams of being somewhere else. We tend not to say to ourselves: "Always remember that the grass is equally green on both sides of the fence." We need an imaginary place in our minds where the sun always shines and things are better, and we call it ... Florida. (All right, some people call it Provence, or Tuscany, or Zanzibar, but across most of America and Europe, Florida is the most popular daydream.)

The Sunshine State is where people want to go if they win the Lottery, or get a building society windfall, or simply want to splash out. It was the unseen star of *Midnight Cowboy*. Set in the mean streets of New York, the

film was driven by the longing of Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight to live in the clean, wealthy sunlight of Florida.

Throughout America, the middle class aspire to retire there. Throughout Europe, they want to go on holiday there. And for Mrs Whalin it seems it was the ultimate "get away from it all" destination (although no American would go to Florida in July; it is far too hot). The same sunshine and the same escapism attract the global rich and the Caribbean poor to Miami. Miami Versace and Cuban émigrés made their homes there (or third home in Versace's case, after Milan and Lake Como). Floridians, it is said, are born Puerto Rican and die Caucasian.

Part of the attraction of Florida is the timeless sun, sand and sea formula – although until the invention of air-conditioning and the draining of the swamps it was a rather inhospitable place. At the time of her arrest, Mrs Whalin was, we are told, enjoying the luxury of Room 1404 at the plush Ocean Point resort on Plantation Key, one of the string of islands which stretches from the southern tip of the state. The Florida Keys are described in the brochures as one of America's "most beautiful unspoilt wildlife havens" – which no doubt they were before Ocean Point was built. But that is the trouble with earthly paradises: they are fine until people get there.



And Florida, being America, is a paradise open to the masses. The history of the state is the history of escapism brought back to reality. After the indigenous population was deported to Oklahoma (no, really) and Florida became the 27th state in 1846, there began a huge migration from the rest of the US. The original inhabitants were descendants of native Americans and escaped slaves – slaves who had fled Caribbean islands to freedom, only to find themselves struggling to survive in the disease-ridden, reptile-infested swamps. The growth of 20th-century Florida was described as "frantic to the point of chaos", and it inevitably became the place – Cape Kennedy – from where America reached for the stars. But it also inevitably created in Miami one of the largest areas of urban deprivation in America, with a television police serial to match.

Then in 1971, the fantasy was made plastic, wood and concrete, a theme park the size of Manchester called Disney World. Now it employs 40,000 people and attracts 25-million visitors a year, more than the whole of Spain. It was conceived by Walt Disney himself as a utopian "Experimental Prototype Community Of Tomorrow". It is the last word in making mass fantasies real, a place where smoking, chewing gum and facial hair are outlawed (for the staff – or Cast Members – at least). A place where everyone

wears Mickey Mouse ears but still genuinely has a good time. A place where class distinctions are suppressed: even Princess Diana took Princes William and Harry there four years ago (although they did stay in the £1,000-a-night Grand Floridian Beach Resort Hotel).

It is a fantasy which exerts a strong gravitational pull across the Atlantic, a powerful combination of cheap package flights, sunshine and child-led demand. But the whole point of Disney's experimental prototype is that it is not a community and you could not live there for long. For one thing, you would spend half your life queuing. And then outside Disney World, Florida is just like the rest of America, only hotter and with more old people. Dreaming of escaping there is like looking forward to retiring to the south coast of England only to find that all the B&Bs do social security claimants and the place is clogged with junkies.

Tracey Whalin is only the latest of millions to have discovered that escaping to Florida cannot suspend the laws of inevitable disappointment. What makes her story so compelling is the contrast between the idea of disappearing in a "clean break" and the reality of being charged with assault on an underage boy. As summer begins in earnest, it is only human to dream of escape. But it is only real life to wake up in leg-irons.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Dangerous implications of the Dearing report

**Sir:** In the coverage of the Dearing report there has been a failure to assess its implications in anything other than financial terms. This is symptomatic of an era which could produce something like the Dearing report which assesses higher education as a matter of economics.

Quite simply, the report will mean the wilting of liberal arts courses in the system as those students from low- and middle-income backgrounds who are brave enough to take on the massive debts will feel obliged to take those subjects which seem to promise immediate employment upon graduation: accountancy, business studies, media studies etc.

Higher education colleges and the smaller universities will therefore cut the arts departments due to falling demand and the liberal arts will become the preserve of the older universities which are rarely on the cutting edge of intellectual enquiry these days but which have prestige and accumulated resources, and those students who can afford to attend them and to devote three years of their lives to non-vocational courses.

The cultural implications for a nation which prizes its "working class" out of the liberal arts are dangerously divisive.

Dr JAMES H MILLS  
Department of History  
University of Edinburgh

**Sir:** Your leader ("Dearing: so much paper, so little inspiration", 24 July) describes a three-tier model of higher education, as if it were something imported from the US. Surely this is exactly what we had in this country, before the previous government turned all the polytechnics into universities.

Sir Ron Dearing was left with the unenviable task of funding this hungry sector, without any honest means of raising the money. His solution, like the existing student loans scheme, is a con trick, the equivalent of the Chancellor proposing to increase income tax in 10 years' time to pay for current expenditure. That would be laughed out of the House of Commons, as should this proposal to fund education out of the future income of its beneficiaries.

It is the duty of each generation, collectively, to educate its children. To abdicate that responsibility, as we are doing, is tragically mean, selfish and short-sighted.

PHIL TRORY  
Aylesbury, Warwickshire

**Sir:** It is ironic that you should use a picture of Julie Walters' student character in *Educating Rita* to make your point that "loans for fees would leave poorer students, like the character she plays, with larger debts

than her better-off counterparts" ("Goodbye to all that: our free universities are history", 24 July).

As an Open University student, she would be classed as being ineligible for any mandatory grant under the present system, never mind the new. The best an Open University student can hope for is a discretionary grant from his or her local education authority. With tuition fees currently in the region of £350 pa (plus summer schools at around £300), and six full course passes needed for a degree, the Open University is in danger of becoming inaccessible to those on lower incomes who might best stand to better themselves by gaining qualifications there.

STEVE BULL  
Bournemouth

**Sir:** One of the clearest parts of the Hippocratic Oath guarantees free teaching to children of other doctors.

University tuition fees will bear particularly and unfairly heavily on medical students as they have a longer course, and shorter vacations than other students.

Dr ADRIAN MIDGLEY  
(Chairman BMJ Division  
East Devon and Exeter)  
LOUISA MIDGLEY  
(Sixth-former, potential medical student)  
Exeter

**Sir:** Your editorial on the devolution debate in Wales ("Yes or no, Wales is ready for the great debate", 24 July) was interesting, but hugely incorrect in one essential respect. You stated that there was widespread assent to Lord Tionypandy's proposition that the existing system of Welsh government works well and is trusted by the populace. This is palpably untrue.

Over the last 18 years of Conservative government, the majority of Welsh people have realised that the administrative system in Wales is demonstrably undemocratic. We have had four successive Conservative secretaries of state who were not Welsh, did not represent Welsh constituencies and were members of the minor political party in Wales. Despite this, they wielded unchallenged political power in a position that was likened by one of them to that of a *Gauleiter*. They ruled by the aid of undemocratic, unaccountable quangos and semi-public money back to the Treasury because of an ideological opposition to spending it here.

There now exists in Wales a democratic deficit, and even those areas that were overwhelmingly hostile to devolution in 1979, such as south-east Wales, now have grassroots groups in support of devolution. A "yes" vote in

### English vote for devolution

**Sir:** Neil Lyndon's attack on the "Celtic Fringe" is quite absurd ("Let the English voice be heard", 23 July). I was born and brought up in Wales and never had any sense of being on the "fringe" of anything. It's this sort of English nationalism which has led to the increase in nationalism in Scotland and Wales.

We're not all nationalists; I support any policy which will decentralise power and make government more accountable to local people, that is why I think it is a shame that English regions are being denied the right to referendums on devolution.

ALUN PARSONS  
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire

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There now exists in Wales a democratic deficit, and even those areas that were overwhelmingly hostile to devolution in 1979, such as south-east Wales, now have grassroots groups in support of devolution. A "yes" vote in

September is a vote for democracy and a vote against what was becoming an increasingly corrupt and nepotistic form of government.

CERI JONES  
Dinas Powys, Vale of Glamorgan

**Sir:** Neil Lyndon correctly points out that England has not been given a democratic choice on the future of the UK. But the "voices of the Celtic fringe" are asking for a vote on their own future in the UK, not England's.

If England wants to vote on the future of the UK let it vote on England remaining within the UK, then it too has a voice in the shaping of relations with its neighbours.

PADRAIC GAVIN  
Southall, Middlesex

**Sir:** Thank goodness for Neil Lyndon's sensible essay. If the inhabitants of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales are to be given a choice about their relationship to the rest of the existing UK, we English must be given our referendum about continued membership of the UK too.

If the kingdom of Scotland, the principality of Wales, and the province of Northern Ireland wish to remain together, fine. But let them do so without English subsidies.

ERIC THOMPSON  
London NW2

**Sir:** New Labour seems to be resolutely Old Labour in its attitude to the voters of Wales. Why have they selected an electoral system which allows the voter hardly any influence over which of a party's candidates is elected? Could it be that they don't trust the voters to select suitably docile representatives?

They could instead have chosen STV, the sane and logical system used to elect Northern Ireland's MEPs. STV is Liberal Democrat party policy. What are Liberal democrats Wales and elsewhere going to do about it?

SIMON GAZELEY  
Bath

**Sir:** Let there be any suspicion that the far-sighted fellow whose business methods you described in today's front-page report (24 July) is merely a lone idealistic crackpot, let me disabuse such doubts.

Ken Lewis has apparently handed over the running of his metal-working firm to the workers themselves, and its efficiency has improved, staff morale is sky-high, and he is in clover, spending much of his time crusading on behalf of his radical ideas.

Well, they're not so radical. In 1988, as a motoring journalist, I toured several General Motors factories in Detroit and satellite towns in Michigan and Indiana where a subsidiary of GM, which is the world's biggest company in the world, was conducting the same

experiment as Mr Lewis, to the satisfaction of the GM board.

In my report at the time I wrote: "We met the workers at a remarkable factory run by GM's Delco Remy Division, in Anderson, Indiana. They were a happy bunch, free from the shackles of management supervision. They disciplined themselves, punched time clocks, organised their own work schedules, took whatever lunch hours and other breaks seemed reasonable, and depended utterly on trust and peer-group pressure, to keep the factory running efficiently."

If a company the size of General Motors thinks such ideas are worth trying, perhaps more UK firms will respond favourably to Mr Lewis's successful initiative.

JOHN LILLEY  
Richmond, Surrey

### Happy workers discipline themselves

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JOHN LILLEY  
Richmond, Surrey

## LETTER from THE EDITOR

I loathe smoking. But people do perverse things. Think of the dangerous and often hilarious things people get up to in pursuit of sexual fulfilment

Nevertheless, it is no doubt important that this sort of thing be avoided if the Scottish parliament really is opened in a couple of years' time. But whatever it is, to be a proper parliamentary building this one will need statues outside. There must be one of John Smith, the former Labour leader and passionate devolutionist. There should certainly be one of Fletcher of Saltoun, the anti-Union leader of the Patriotic Party in the last Scottish parliament and one of the first people in these islands to make the case for British federalism – he wanted regional economic capitals to balance the power of London. But since one of the biggest threats to any new parliament is its own self-importance, there must also be a statue raised of Tam Dalyell, Labour's most passionate anti-devolutionist, shaking a great granite fist at the whole affair.

Andrew Marr

### QUOTE UNQUOTE

The first girl spoke on My Little Pony. The second boy on What I Did During the Holidays, and William spoke on Reform of the House of Lords – Stella Hague, mother of the Leader of the Opposition, on her son's first public speaking contest as a child.

Part of being American is to feel that you deserve more than you have – Andrew Hacker, professor of political science at New York's Queen's College, author of *Money:*

## the saturday story

The Victorians knew how to commemorate their dead, but later generations passed over the subject in silence. Now, however, we are developing new rituals for a secular society, says Glenda Cooper



Photograph: David Hughes

Mourning glory: weeping angels adorn Victorian tombs in London's Highgate cemetery

# The British way of death

*Dying  
Is an art like everything else  
I do it exceptionally well*

**S**o said the poet Sylvia Plath. But then she was an American. Death has not been the forte of the British since the 19th-century cult of mourning passed out of fashion.

Gianni Versace's relatives knew exactly how to commemorate his life as befitted the flamboyant Italian – with a memorial service soon after his murder which was packed with stars – Diana, Princess of Wales, Elton John, Naomi Campbell. In comparison, the half-English Sir James Goldsmith slipped quietly into Spain for his tax-efficient dying.

It is said that you can tell a lot about a society by the way its members treat their dead. In the 1960s, Jessica Mitford satirised the American funeral industry in her book *The American Way of Death*, criticising undertakers who charged vast amounts and ridiculing the custom of prettifying corpses.

In comparison the British Way of Death has been caricatured as a society which cannot cope with dying. We are seen as a community that has left the

trappings of the Victorian era behind – the widow's weeds, the mourning rings, the great plumed horses, the weeping carved angels in cemeteries – while still unsure how to commemorate our dead.

It was easier when the Church dealt with everything and the act of dying was only a short stop on the way to eternal life. You crippled yourself with weighty insurance to ensure a good send-off and escape the indignity of a pauper's grave, and were secure in the knowledge that heaven or hell awaited you. Meanwhile your surviving family would mourn for years; your gravestone would be huge, and the list of your virtues carved on it long and impressive.

But sweep away the common misconception that we are a society that cannot mention the "D" word – we are increasingly fascinated by death and are busy developing new rituals for our secular era. Like Sylvia Plath, we do it exceptionally well.

While Versace's relatives may have gone for a traditional church service, here in Britain Pat Lewis from Derbyshire had her husband's coffin painted with blue sky and clouds and used their VW Camper instead

of a hearse. Liz Daniels buried her daughter Rosie in a woodland plot so that her daughter could be near her. "We wanted her close by somewhere she would want to be," she said. "It was a beautiful day and all who were there will never forget the beauty of death."

And for £400 Julian Wedgwood will bury you and your pet under an oak tree based in North Devon in the first cemetery for pets and people. Usually, however, we don't bury people these days. Cremations are the norm, because of pressure on burial space.

One aspect of the new cult of death can be seen in the ritual of leaving wrapped-up flowers at the scene of violent death. This practice started in the mid-80s as a local custom here and there, but what really accelerated it was Hillsborough in 1989. More than a million people visited the football ground in a week to leave flowers and drape scarves. The practice has become a symbol of the way the community commemorates death to such an extent that this week a group of NatWest staff left flowers to someone who died in a traffic accident outside one of their Bath branches, although they have such different perceptions. Say if you have a marriage – one person from Northern Ireland and one from Kent, one middle-class, working class. And say a child dies: they

involved and the accident was nothing to do with the bank.

Another new ritual can be found in the books of condolences that are commonly opened after death, such as that of Bernadette Martin, the Catholic girl who was murdered for having a Protestant boyfriend days before the announcement of the new ceasefire in Northern Ireland.

Some close-knit communities around Britain jealously cling to their old rites. In the South Wales mining communities and in the Hebrides, women still do not attend the final burial of the deceased.

And while it is quite acceptable in Northern Irish funerals for photographs to be taken, in England it is frowned upon as an invasion of privacy.

As with everything in Britain, class plays its part in how your send-off is organised. "While the middle class led the way in giving up the Victorian way of death, the working class took two or three generations longer to give it up. It probably has only really gone this generation," says Dr Tony Walter, a sociologist and council member of the National Funeral College. "It can still cause a lot of upset though, because people have such different perceptions. Say if you have a marriage – one person from Northern Ireland and one from Kent, one middle-class, working class. And say a child dies: they

will have completely different notions of how to deal with the whole thing."

And increased longevity has brought its own challenges. We don't attend as many funerals when we are young because people have longer lifespans – in fact it's possible to go through most of your life only going to one or two funerals, those of your parents. Consequently, we are no longer sure what is the "right" thing to do, while resenting the "stripped down" attitude of funerals

you could drop dead suddenly of an infectious disease, the big killers now are coronary heart disease and cancer. People have heart attack and then live under the shadow of heart problems for several years. With AIDS the experience is similar. As a result, we have more time to plan how our lives should be commemorated.

And most of our plans will be realisable as there is practically nothing your mourners can do that is illegal. "Death used to be seen as the one thing

the 23rd Psalm and *Abide with Me* remain perennially popular, many choose to play the deceased's favourite songs instead. So your loved one's life can be marked by a Spice Girls song, a Paul Simon number or a Bach cantata.

Although truly "alternative" funerals still remain a small part of the market, they are growing fast.

The Natural Death Centre's promotion of green burials has mushroomed. In 1993 there was one woodland burial site; now there are 58. Earlier this year the NDC organised its fifth annual Day of the Dead, which gives awards for things like Best Funeral Shop (won this year by Britain's first designer death boutique, Heaven on Earth, in Bristol which designs multi-function coffins) and Best Woodland Burial Ground (won by Greenhaven Woodland Burial Ground near Rugby with their offer of a budget package: body pick-up from London, cardboard coffin and tree for £490).

It might sound grisly but two years ago the Corporation of London opened all of the 200-acre London Cemetery and Crematorium, billing it as a "unique day" to "dispel the misconceptions surrounding funerals". Visitors to Europe's largest working cemetery could have a coach ride round the site, opened in 1856, to see the graves of Dame Anna Neagle and two of Jack the Ripper's

victims. Ecological companies advertised their cardboard coffins, while memorial masons and funeral directors explaining the merits of pre-paid funerals and crematorium technicians were on hand to explain why it is impossible to get the wrong ashes. More than 5,000 people turned up for what is now an annual event.

Our fascination with death is set to continue, with other outlets for grief being explored. There is now a supermarket-style funeral parlour in Cattford, south London called The Funeral Centre where one can go shopping for one's favourite casket. There are now over 50 pet crematoriums and cemeteries in Britain – with marble gravestones, cremations, coffins, spiritual guidance and professional counselling widely available to help ease the pain of pet loss. And the Internet provides locations such as Virtual Heaven where surfers can leave eternal cybermessages for their dearly departed.

For those who feel all this might be getting a bit much, we have still a long way to go before our cult of death reaches that of some former civilisations. Jessica Mitford, given a tour of the Museum of Embalming in Texas, came to the section devoted to ancient Egypt and exclaimed: "Now, there was a society that let the funeral directors get completely out of control."

## We search for ways to celebrate an individual's unique contribution

benefit of religious significance.

This leads to our increasingly searching for ways to celebrate an individual's unique contribution to life, says Lindsey Irvine of the Natural Death Centre, a London-based charity that gives information about alternative funerals. "Our attitudes to all rites of passage are altering, but nowhere is this more marked than the rites of passage connected with death. They are becoming more individualised. People don't quite see that the old traditions have to be observed."

The way we die has also changed. We have a lot more warning about our impending doom. Whereas 100 years ago,

in life you can't control and so people wouldn't think about it," says Mary Stuart, of the National Association of Funeral Directors. "That is why there are actually very few government or local authority laws concerning what to do when someone dies."

So if you wanted to bury someone without a coffin, or if you wish to dance in the crematorium, there is nothing but a sense of what's appropriate to stop you.

Even if the bereaved don't want to do anything particularly *outre* for their dead relative, they still may attempt to make the service individual through the music. Although

it might sound grisly but two years ago the Corporation of London opened all of the 200-acre London Cemetery and Crematorium, billing it as a "unique day" to "dispel the misconceptions surrounding funerals". Visitors to Europe's largest working cemetery could have a coach ride round the site, opened in 1856, to see the graves of Dame Anna Neagle and two of Jack the Ripper's

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**karen krizanovich**

You British! Is it typically upper class to cover antiques with cling film? I've got to figure this out. Last week, I went to a wedding at a country home. The whole shebang was stunning (if abnormally quiet for me because, for once, I arrived with a gorgeous hunk; no more single girl's hidden agenda for me).

Inside the stately manse, I plunked my champagne flute on a marble-topped table and was surprised to see it was anointed in plastic wrap. All the antiques in the main hall had had their flat surfaces neatly covered. This puzzled me. Antiques always cling of course to good taste. But good taste – that which offends the least, most of the time – isn't about personal preference; it's to gain the approval of other people. Whoever said "Hell is other people" got equally content without a ticket to the Royal Enclosure?

A possible explanation came from recollections of my Auntie Anne's house on the south side of Chicago. Her living-room davenport (sofa to you) was always covered in protective, see-through plastic. It was the kind of davenport that, if you sat down on it – especially in the summer, when wearing shorts – you'd rip a skin graft from your thighs as you stood up. We used to poke fun at Auntie Anne, with her hermetically sealed sofa and her velvet paintings of nude female torsos.

But here, in this ancient home, echoes of Anne filled up my sense. Was she saving her sofa for future generations? Perhaps in 2060, people will refer to it

as a perfectly preserved piece of Chicago style? Nah.

There's another connection between Auntie Anne (who was a switchboard operator) and the affable Duke of Earl Style, darling. The upper class and the working class are the only two social groups with real style – which translates into not giving two hoots what other people think. At the ends of the social spectrum, they need to impress no one – they feel, as the French say, *ben dans leur peau*.

That's why "eccentric" and "nuts" are almost synonymous. Each means: "If you don't like it, lump it." The difference lies in that "eccentrics" have money – if not land and social position – while those who are just plain "nuts" seem equally content without a ticket to the Royal Enclosure.

The middle class, Britain's neither children of style, are uneasy creatures. Too insecure for style, they are doomed to good taste. But good taste – that which offends the least, most of the time – isn't about personal preference; it's to gain the approval of other people. Whoever said "Hell is other people" got equally content without a ticket to the Royal Enclosure.

It's all just too damned sad. No wonder everyone loves a lord. The rest of us middlings are so busy worrying about what's in – nobody wears chunky heels any more! We forgot to book at MoMo! – that we are just too tired to put down plastic for posterity. If that isn't neurosis, I don't know what is.

Of course, the fact that I had to ask about that cling film proves that I am middle class. Then again, as an American, I can be nothing else. What's your excuse?

Let's talk about money. How much does it cost to be trendy and have fun? Well, in New York, not much. The latest craze there is to wear gold stretchy strings – the kind you get on gift boxes – as bracelets. The American woman who told me this giggled, "Cheap chic is fun."

I dug out a gold string from the junk drawer. Who needs to buy a pair of J.P. Todds at £170 clams a pop? I put on the string and it looked ... like a cheap, scratchy, nasty little gold string. Did I feel young, fun and trendy? No.

I was wearing a fashion statement that said, in an over-loud American voice, "Due to a momentary synapse failing, I am wearing what I should have closed the garbage with." The garbage bag would have looked better. Of course it would have. It cost more.

Unlike trendiness, fun is priceless. And no matter how hard you try – in fact, diametrically opposed to how hard you try – it cannot be bought. Not even by Howard Hughes, who supposedly asked the Beverly Hills Hotel staff to hide beef sandwiches in the palm trees. It cost a lot to get those sandwiches up there, but the fun he had getting them down was, essentially, free.

Then again, he was crazy, and crazy

people can have fun with things like that. String, even.

Fun is not indexed-linked to money. Here's a case in point. I was invited, at the last minute, to a swanky party in the country. I liked the hostess but the feeling wasn't palpably mutual. My partner was everyone's best friend. I'd been here before. I thought, I will be seated between two jackals with halitosis who do the "Wasn't Muffy great at tennis last Tuesday?" sort of thing. My blood ran cold.

The venue was faultless – a brilliant white marquee, ice sculptures and mounds of canapés. In the full moon, I saw no one I knew. Past a strange white statue at the foot of the pool, I found my place and sat down. Even in paradise, I am ... nervous.

"I've read you," said the young man to my right. "Not my style, but it's fun." My God, he spoke. And his first words were, "What's your name again?" How easily was the curse of the Unknown Sit-Down Dinner Guest broken. If he hadn't taken an interest, no number of lawn brazier or fez-topped waiters could have stirred me.

The party's fun quotient had nothing to do with how much the hostess spent on sausages. Let's face it, fun is when someone takes an interest in somebody. Or something. Or, in the case of the strange pool statue – which turned out to be a real woman slathered in white – both. Maybe I shouldn't have offered her a smoke, but, hell, it was fun.

مكالمات من الأدلة



## it's good to squawk

people might be alarmed that middle-aged men go out at night and talk to owls but let me confess ...

**david aaronovitch**

You must have heard the *Y* story. Every evening for a year, computer programmer Neil Symmons would go down to the end of his garden in Stokeinteignhead, Devon, and call to the owls. And the owls would call back. So intense and varied did these crepuscular exchanges become that Mr Symmons – an owl breeder by hobby – began to nurture hopes of finally discovering the hidden language of owls. "Hoo-hoo-hoo," hooted Mr Symmons. "Who-hoo-hoo-hoo," replied the owl.

As it happens, exactly the same time, Fred Corne, a retired company director, was enjoying a very similar (though slightly more passive) twilight conversation with the owl at the bottom of his own garden. "Hoo-hoo-hoo," went the owl. "Who-hoo-hoo-hoo," Mr Corne would respond.

For any two men to be spending exactly the same evenings thus engaged may be considered mildly coincidental. What lifts this tale beyond the normal, however, is that Mr Corne is also a resident of tiny Stokeinteignhead. Indeed, his garden in fact abuts to that of Mr Symmons. And the obvious explanation of their shared experience would surely be that the one – unaware of events next door – had been communing with the very same garrulous bird who had been so entertaining the other.

Unfortunately this one-owl/two men explanation was exploded by a chance conversation between their two wives, who met each other in the driveway and began to chat. One recounted how her lovely, but eccentric, spouse liked to hoot in the garden before bed. The other reciprocated with tales of how her own feller liked nothing better than a nice alfresco squawk before turning in. The two women looked at each other; the men were called, the case put to them – and each recorded an example of his owl-speak. In the end they were left, inescapably, with the two men/no owl theory. This will have been particularly galling for Mr Symmons who, as an expert, will have known that

some of his calls were – what shall we say? – hoots of avian desire. And (in owl terms) Mr Corne is probably no beauty.

Embarrassment aside, there are – I think – a number of interesting questions that arise from the adventures of the owl-callers of Devon. In the first place, some people may be alarmed that respectable, middle-aged men go out at night and talk to the birds. But let me confess that this does not surprise me, for I too suffer an inexplicable compulsion to talk to animals. On my rambles I moo at cows, bark at sheep (changing the timbre of bleat according to the age and sex of animal: high and broken for lambs, deeper for rams), bark at dogs, whistle at budgerigars and, when no one is looking, squeak at mice. I do this because I am a man, and men must try to communicate – even with animals. We live in a perpetual state of experimentation.

The next question concerns neighbourliness. It took more than 12 months for two sets of neighbours – hamlet dwellers, not denizens of city rookeries – to fall into conversation with each other, so that the true hoots might be discovered. This suggests that connection with those who live on our borders is not a priority in modern Britain.

Third, when such conversation does begin it is invariably the women who begin it. Their husbands – perfectly happy to spend night after night hooting speculatively at strange, unseen birds of prey – will limit their discourse to an occasional half-wave, part-smile and semi-greeting. Could this be our old friend, the feminine social gene, at work?

And four. When, eventually, the women do speak to each other, it is to exchange stories concerning the odd and unaccountable habits of their husbands. Had Mrs Corne and Mrs Symmons spoken about anything else, then the story would never have emerged.

Finally, and most poignantly of all, one suspects that Fred and Neil have not become bosom pals, and that – in the end – they had far more to say to each other as owls than they did as men.

**W**e all thought the last of the Mohicans, the famous Indian tribe is riding the range again. Today the Mohicans, reborn, have found a new vocation.

Instead of tracking wolves in the greenwoods of Connecticut, the braves are scalping the palefaces across the green baize – to the tune of \$100m profit a year.

"Before the night has come, have I lived to see the last warrior of the wise race of the Mohicans," lamented James Fenimore Cooper in his stirring story of 1826. This fine phrase, which passed into modern folklore, no longer holds true.

Before the night has come, a thousand twinkling lights will be gleaming around the dome of the tribe's hi-tech casino. They shine down on thousands of tense, eager faces along the rows of slot machines and blackjack tables.

For the Mohegans (modern spelling) are alive and well and running their own casino. The Mohegan Sun, buzzing with excited gamblers, old and young, is only two hours 20 minutes' drive from New York. It is attracting between 20,000 and 25,000 visitors a day and expanding fast.

In its first year of operation since opening last October, the casino's gross revenue is likely to reach \$350m (estimates vary). "That yields a 30 per cent profit, but we hope to raise the figure to 32 per cent or 33 per cent next year," says executive vice president Bill Velardo. Financial backing has come from a surprising source, Sol Kerzner, creator of Sun City in South Africa.

Kerzner, now out of South Africa, is a controversial figure. "All work and a lot of play make money," is his motto. His group runs several tropical resorts, notably Paradise Island in the Bahamas, which was for years a dead end. His aim is to "blow away the customer" – dazzle him with entertainment value.

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Instead of tracking wolves in the greenwoods of Connecticut, the braves are scalping palefaces across the green baize to the tune of \$100m profit a year

means we are making a billion," says tribal chairman, Roland Harris.

Kerzner was finally granted a gaming licence in Connecticut in July 1996. The casino opened three months later.

A huge white dome, like a gigantic flying saucer, the building was formerly a factory for nuclear reactor components. Hidden below the main highway, the casino sits astride the reservation in a green valley overlooking the Thames river. It is big – 600,000 square feet with 2,700 slot machines and 180 gaming tables.

Built to a circular (wigwam) design, the casino has a woodsy, outdoors feel about it, thanks to decorative

use of timber and water and Indian motifs. The gambling floor is divided into four sections portraying spring, summer, autumn and winter, highlighting seasonal changes in Mohegan life.

The whole structure, in the architect David Rockwell's formula, strives to combine nature with theatricality. One aspect of this is slot-machine games with names such as Cash Canoe and Mohegan Money Tree.

How does the remnant of a small tribe, long languishing in the backwoods of Connecticut, set about operating a modern casino? Answer: by joining forces with the paleface invaders. Top manage-

ment has been hired from the American gaming industry.

As often happens with economic success, some opposition has been aroused. But the strength of feeling is less in the local community – the 5,000 full-time jobs in the enterprise were applied for many times over – than among the Mohegans' native American rivals, the Mashantucket Pequot. Ten miles down the road in the greenwoods lies the reservation of the Pequot tribe, the fox people. Foxwoods has established itself as the biggest and most profitable casino resort in the United States. Relations between the two tribes, in diplomatic parlance, are correct rather than cordial.

Their rivalry goes back a long way. The early Mohegans, known as the wolf people, attracted by the hunting and shellfish along the coast, became known as "invaders" to other tribes. But the English invasion was far more threatening. The pilgrims' ship

was described as "an animal with wings" – when it spoke it made a noise like thunder and smoke and fire came out

of its mouth and it would swallow all the Indians up.

Around 1635, in the quarrel between the tribes over whether to resist or placate the European invaders, the Mohegans and the Pequots split. Uncas, leader of the Mohegans, sought to co-operate with the colonists and managed to preserve a measure of independence for his own people. The Pequots were massacred.

Now their tribal rivalry is being played out in a new form, in casino gambling. Foxwoods has proved such a gigantic success that it is outperforming even the glitzy palaces of Las Vegas. In comparison, the Mohegan Sun is a mere cub. "We think the two properties will support each other," says Velardo. "There is room for both of us to grow."

It is odd to find two such glittery money-making enterprises almost side by side, dividing the same rural patch of south-eastern Connecticut. Their success is founded on a simple fact of geography: 22 million people live within a radius of 150 miles.

Where do the Mohegans go from here? A mile outside the casino, on a little hill, stands the tribal museum. This is no more than a wooden hut but an extraordinary place, not least for the presence of Gladys Tantaquidene, a sprightly 98-year-old. She is described as the tribe's medicine woman, a living repository of wisdom and tradition. She greets visitors to the museum, which is a jumble of mementoes, documents, old photos, feathers, tomahawks, utensils and other curiosities, every day.

"This is home," says Jane Fawcett, simply but with great feeling. As vice-chairman of the tribal council, she has lived in the house next door all her life. She is far more involved with the culture of the Mohegans than the operation of the casino, though it is the latter that funds the health, education and welfare of her people.

Gladys Tantaquidene knows how to make a cordial from forest herbs and is wise in many precepts of nature, such as that when dogwoods bloom it is time to fish for shad. But her importance to the tribe is far greater than merely recalling folklore. Her collection of documents and records, including hundreds of postcards from Mohegan people, played a decisive role in establishing the continuity of the tribe, in securing federal recognition in 1994.

The Mohegans are here to stay.

## The real revolution is in London



**Trevor Phillips**

**Forget devolution – the capital has 5 million voters, more than in all of Scotland and Wales. And soon they'll have a new mayor**

I think for a moment above the skirt of triumphalist bagpipes, let us speculate. In 50 years' time, will the publication of the proposals for devolution of power to Scotland be remembered as the moment that our democracy was transformed?

I would lay odds now that it won't. The moment of genuine transformation will come, not with the inauguration of Scotland's first minister, but with the election of London's mayor. Both will purport to modernise our democracy, but while one offers an ethnic variant of politics as we know it, the other could, with care and vision, take us into the political future.

This is not an attempt to rain on Scotland's parade. Devolution will undoubtedly bring some political powers closer to the Scottish people. The fact that the voices debating their education, health, environment and so forth will do so in Scottish accents will make everyone feel better.

However, it would be utterly naive to suppose that this will fundamentally change politics in the UK. Both the anti-devolution hysteria and the pro-devolution euphoria are misplaced. The Scottish parliament will have the right to vary taxes, but it will not, in the end, be able to override the structures of the UK chancellor. For example, Mr Brown

could decide that public spending north of the Border should be cut by as much as any revenue raised by the parliament, leaving the Scottish first minister's purse strings firmly in the grip of the Treasury. Certain kinds of laws – abortion rights, for example – will be the prerogative of the UK parliament, and the Scots will not be able to override them. This may cause some irritation in Edinburgh, but most Scots know that they, and we, are better off together than apart. In fact, unless there are provisions not yet announced, there is little likelihood of a Scottish breakaway.

What is perhaps more disappointing – or reassuring, if you're a Scottish Tory – is that the parliament will either reflect or reinforce the worst features of its Westminster parent. Seventy-nine MPs, as they are to be called, will be elected by the first-past-the-post system; the rest will be appointed by the political parties in proportion to their electoral success.

The result will be to put the entire process into the hands of the political machine, particularly the Labour machine. In essence, Scotland will become a one-party semi-state. It feels like a missed opportunity; the Scots will get a shiny new political box, and will open it to find politics as usual.

Similar criticism could be levelled at Tory MPs' decision to exclude party members from

the election of their leader; we know that had the members voted, the result would have been different.

If we can ignore the noise of self-selected contenders preparing for battle (one of them has already hired his campaign manager), we can see that the mayor of London will be a new kind of political creature for Britain. He or she will be the first person in British history elected to carry out an executive task and to wield power. The mayor will probably belong to a political party, but he or she will not have to answer to a party caucus for their actions – an advantage not shared even by the Prime Minister. If reinforced by a system of election such as alternative voting which allows voters to mark their first, second and third preferences, we may see a political leader unshackled from the cage of party discipline.

In short, the mayor's first loyalty can be to the city rather than to his political mates. That, in turn, may well produce a new openness and flexibility within the political parties themselves: if the chief can dissent, why not the Indians? At its extreme, might there not be places in the government of the world's greatest city for people of more than one party and of none? Is there some natural force other than the whispering of personal ego that prevents Tony Banks and

Steve Norris working together to make London better?

Of course, there's another partner in the proposed set-up. The assembly is meant to act as a check on the mayor's power. That is reasonable in principle, but the details are important. Handled wrongly, the assembly could become a scaled-down home for sad leftovers from the GLC era, eternally carping, suspicious and grimly striving to restrain the power of an adventurous and popular mayor.

That is what will happen if members are elected on the same old borough boundaries, using a first-past-the-post system. Each member of the assembly will come bearing the shopping list of his or her local area, and politics will be reduced to horse-trading between villages. On the other hand, were there to be a system of proportional representation whereby each party got a number of seats allocated according to the number of votes, we could end up with a chamber full of party placemen.

The answer may lie in between; if London can't come up with a creative solution, the whole enterprise isn't worth the candle. If, however, we make the right choice for the capital, the year 2000 could see the emergence of a political culture in London that is as exciting as its artistic output. And within months it will spread across our land.

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# William J. Brennan

William J. Brennan was one of the great justices in the history of the United States Supreme Court. Appointed in 1956 by President Dwight Eisenhower, he was the most influential member of Earl Warren's court which, by its decisions in the 1950s and 1960s, transformed the nation.

The origins of this period of judicial activism went back to the 1930s, when Brennan was still practising law in his native New Jersey. Facing the crisis of the great depression, when one American in four was unemployed, Congress passed emergency legislation which the conservative Supreme Court struck down as unconstitutional. Though Congress rejected President Franklin Roosevelt's attempt to reform the Court, the death of its older and more conservative justices enabled Roosevelt to appoint liberal successors.

These justices, like Hugo Black, Felix Frankfurter and William O. Douglas, were the core of the Court when Eisenhower appointed Earl Warren and Brennan himself in the 1950s. Eisenhower came to regard the appointments as among his worst mistakes, but Brennan had given public warning of his views.

He had defended the rights of criminal defendants in speeches in his home state of

New Jersey, attacked President Truman's use of loyalty oaths and compared the excesses of Senator Joe McCarthy to the Salem witch trials. McCarthy cast the lone dissenting vote when the Senate confirmed Brennan's appointment.

He was born in 1906, the second of eight children, to a father who was a coal shoveller in a local brewery before becoming a prominent labour leader and municipal reformer. William, who graduated near the top of his class at Harvard Law School, believed the Court should give the Constitution a broad construction promoting individual liberty and equality.

The stage was thus set for the most astonishing period of judicial activism in American history. Eisenhower was a passive president, Congress, driven by conservative/liberal and many other factors, was unable to act. Yet the times demanded action, and the Court moved to provide it.

The field demanding action most urgently was civil rights, and it was here, in *Brown v Board of Education* (1954) that the Court overturned centuries of racial segregation and began a generation of black struggle by declaring segregated schools unconstitutional.

Southern resistance was widespread. "We are under a Constitution," Chief Justice

Hughes had said in the 1930s, "but the Constitution is what the Supreme Court says it is". This essentially conservative doctrine was now used by liberals to justify reform. But perhaps liberal and conservative ideology is the wrong way to look at the problem. Brennan believed the Constitution embodied "a sparkling vision of the supremacy of the human dignity of every individual" and that its "genius rests not in any static meaning it might have had in a world dead and gone, but in the adaptability of its great principles to cope with current problems and current needs".

This doctrine of the flexible Constitution ran through all the Court's momentous decisions Brennan played such a decisive part in shaping.

Brennan also helped tackle the problem of enforcement. Despite his junior rank, he wrote the forceful majority opinion in *Cooper v Aaron* (1958) which resisted the doctrine of federal judicial supremacy to overturn the South's "massive resistance" to desegregation orders.

From now on his position became pivotal. His superb personal, tactical and intellectual abilities made him the ideal "coalition builder" on the Court. Chief Justice Warren said of Brennan that, "Friendly and buoyant in spirit, a prodigious worker and a master craftsman, he is a unifying influence on the bench and in the conference room." He became Warren's closest colleague and the two met weekly before court conferences to discuss cases and plan strategy.

His majority opinion in *Baker v Carr* (1962) was most significant. It went to the heart of conservative resistance to change. For generations, rural areas had been greatly overrepresented in Congress. It took far more urban than rural votes to send one Congressman to Washington. Moreover, since Democrats monopolised Southern politics, their seniority gave them control of crucial Congressional committees.

The reapportionment revolution Brennan began changed all that. In the 1960s and 1970s by enforcing the rule of "one man one vote", Warren later described the decision as the most important of his tenure.

But Brennan was equally concerned with the rights of women. His theory of an evolving Constitution underpinned his efforts to curb government attempts to curb individual "privacy" – a word nowhere mentioned in the Constitution. By such reasoning in *Einsvold v Baird* (1972), he struck down a state law making it a crime to sell contraceptives to unmarried women.

But by then the nation's mood was changing. Liberalism was being replaced by a new conservatism, personified in William Rehnquist's appointment as chief justice. The Constitution was being re-

interpreted again in light of changing times, but right to the end Brennan fought his corner. In 1990 – the year he retired from the Court – in a decision invalidating laws making it a crime to desecrate the flag, he wrote, "We do not consecrate the flag by punishing its desecration, for in doing so we dilute the freedom that this cherished emblem represents."

Brennan's critics claim he epitomised that unrestrained federal judiciary that arrogated to itself ultimate control over almost every aspect of daily life. His view of America as a secular democracy and opposition to prayer in public schools made them especially angry. But Brennan rebutted their arguments as "little more than arrogance cloaked as humility".

**Patrick Renshaw**  
William Joseph Brennan, Judge: born Newark, New Jersey 25 April 1906; admitted to New Jersey Bar 1931; practised in Newark 1931-49; Superior Court Judge 1949-50; Appellate Division Judge 1950-52; Justice, Supreme Court of New Jersey 1952-56; Associate Justice, Supreme Court of the US 1956-90; married 1st 1928 Marjorie Leonard (died 1982; two sons, one daughter), 2nd 1983 Mary Fowler; died Arlington, Virginia 24 July 1997.

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## Antonia Butler



Butler: her playing was innately musical with an almost spiritual quality

The cellist Antonia Butler will be remembered as a dedicated and well-loved teacher, having held important appointments at the Royal College of Music, the Birmingham School of Music and the Menihin School. What is not generally known is that she was a distinguished soloist and chamber music player for many years before deciding that teaching should take pride of place.

She was born in London in 1909 into a musical family and could not recall a time when music was not part of her life. She had her first lessons on the piano at five and went on to the cello with Valentina Orde when she was ten. Her progress was such she was soon able to join in the family music-making. One of her earliest memories was playing at their home with the violinists Jelly and Adila d'Aranyi who were great-nieces of the celebrated violinist Joseph Joachim. As a reward she was given a gold coin which she treasured all her life.

It was through a recommendation from the d'Aranyi sisters that when only 13 she went to Leipzig to study for four years with the great Julius Klemel at the Conservatoire. She considered this a very important period because Klemel taught her to develop her own individual musicality and, in addition, she learned so much of the concerto repertoire, especially the Brahms Double Concerto for cello and violin which she played twice with the Conservatoire Orchestra. She told me that her own interpretation was greatly influenced by her studies with Klemel. "Klemel had heard performances by his dedicatees. Robert Haussmann and Joseph Joachim, and he was able to pass on some very good advice especially on *tempo*".

Butler went on for a further three years study with Diran Alexanian at the Ecole Normale in Paris which was important in an entirely different way from Klemel. Alexanian went into minute detail about every aspect

of the music and Butler remembered how Pablo Casals and Emanuel Feuermann and many other famous musicians would sit in on the sessions.

Butler made her London début recital at the Wigmore Hall in 1930 and received encouraging reviews which led to a number of solo engagements. These included playing the Haydn D Major Concerto in the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, depurated at the last moment for the indisposed Thelma Reiss. It was around this time that the great Portuguese cellist Guilhermina Suggia heard her and was very impressed. In 1937, Butler and the violinist Marjorie Hayward and pianist Kathleen Mackwell formed a piano trio, the "Kamaran" which soon gained a reputation and broadcast frequently.

One of Butler's indelible memories was of a Prom in August 1940 when she was playing the Brahms Double Concerto with the violinist Arthur Cattehill. Halfway through the

evening the air-raid siren sounded, and since regulations did not permit anyone to go on the streets during a raid, nobody could leave the hall. The concert continued, but when the planned programme had finished, the musicians decided to band together to provide an extended number of items.

Butler and Harvey Phillips played a two-cello arrangement of the sonata for two violins by Handel, followed by the Schumann Piano Quintet and so on throughout the night.

The composer Arthur Honneger was a personal friend and Butler played his cello sonata in Paris with Honneger's wife as her partner on the piano. Butler always felt an affinity with this work because Honneger was able to advise them personally.

When her husband died in 1962, Butler gave sonata recitals with a number of pianists including Angus Morrison, but her concert activities were gradually overtaken when she started to teach because she found it increasingly rewarding. Many

of the younger generation of cellists who are in the public eye today remember her as being a very understanding and helpful teacher, but not so understanding if the student lacked musical integrity.

The violinist Maria Lidka, a close friend with whom she played many times, told me that she held strong convictions on many issues and was very outspoken when the need arose. As a person she was kind and generous and friendship, for her, meant total loyalty. These qualities came out in her playing which was innately musical with an almost spiritual quality, best illustrated in her performances of the Bach Solo Suites, to which she remained devoted to the end of her life.

**Margaret Campbell**

**Antonia Katharine Margaret Butler**, cellist: born London 1 June 1909; married 1941 Norman Greenwood (died 1962; one son); died Farnham, Kent 18 July 1997.

## Dame Monica Golding

Monica Golding's prime concern in life was to offer help and comfort to those in need. In culminating of her service and dedication to the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps, she was appointed Matron-in-Chief and Director of Army Nursing Services in June 1956 and DNE in 1958.

She was born Monica Johnson in Chiswick, west London, in 1902, and began her lifelong dedication to nursing at the Royal Surrey County Hospital, Guildford, in 1922. From Guildford she moved to Aldershot in 1925 for midwifery training; her close proximity to the Army there encouraged her to consider a life in the Services.

Her concern for those around her was never more apparent than during the years of the Second World War. She recalled some years later her experiences during Christmas 1939, when she found herself in Northern France as Matron of No 3 Casualty Clearing Station. It was the first Christmas of the war and very little had been organised in the way of festivities.

Later on in the war when she was in Egypt she arranged further live broadcasts to the United Kingdom. She was well aware of the joy that it would give relatives back home to hear the voices of their loved ones.

The war brought changes to the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service and Monica Johnson's experience both at home and abroad was invaluable in the unstable atmosphere which prevailed.

In 1949, the Army Nursing Service was formally integrated into the British army and the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service was renamed 'Queen Alexandra's

served in India as Principal Matron, the last QA sister to serve there. Her authoritative manner must have been well known: when she was approached and asked if the nursing sisters could take part in a farewell parade prior to Indian independence in 1947 the parade commander was most surprised that she was not "up in arms" at the request. She told him firmly that she would have been very annoyed if the QAs had not been represented.

In 1949, the Army Nursing

Service was established and when she took up her appointment in Singapore as Matron she had the additional responsibility of young nurses under training.

Monica Johnson was capable of accepting a wide and diverse range of responsibilities but never failed to give individual consideration to the welfare of the patients and nurses. She took immense trouble to put people at their ease, and always gave sensible and wise advice. She recognised the need for non-nursing officers to relieve the sisters of onerous clerical duties and worked tirelessly

until the first administrative officer was commissioned.

As Director of Army Nursing Services, she represented the Corps on many great occasions, but one of her proudest moments was attending a dinner offered by the Army to the Queen after her accession to the throne in 1952. It had been over 100 years since a banquet of such military magnitude had been held, and present with her were most members of the Royal Family, and over 100 generals. Well aware of the unique occasion that she was attending, she had supervised the design of a new QAs mess dress and it was worn for the first time on this evening.

She retired in 1960 and was

invited to become Colonel Commandant of the Corps in 1961. During her term of office she witnessed the marriage of the Colonel-in-Chief, Princess Margaret and the opening of the new QARANC Training Centre in Aldershot.

Life was generous to her

and her marriage from 1961 to Brigadier the Rev Harry Golding was an immensely happy period. Visitors to their home remember the shared fun and laughter.

**Diana Wilson**  
**Cecilia Monica Johnson**, army officer: born London 6 August 1902; Matron-in-Chief and Director of Army Nursing Services 1956-60;

**Colonel Monica Johnson**, army officer: born London 1902; married 1961 Brigadier the Rev Harry Golding (died 1969; two stepdaughters); died Bournemouth, Dorset 6 June 1997.

## Deaths

### Deaths

FOOT: On 20 July David Robert Peterson almost 82, beloved husband of Helen, died suddenly at St Peter's Upper Church, Petersfield, Hants, 12pm. Tuesday 29 July.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR DEATHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS Births, Marriages & Deaths, Deaths, Memorial services. Wedding anniversaries. In Memoriam should be sent in writing to the Gazette's Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5LB, telephone 0181 330 4000, fax 0181 330 4001, answerphone machine 0181 330 2912 or 0181 291 2912 or 0181 291 2913 or 0181 291 2914 or 0181 291 2915 or 0181 291 2916, or 0181 291 2917 or 0181 291 2918 or 0181 291 2919 or 0181 291 2920 or 0181 291 2921 or 0181 291 2922 or 0181 291 2923 or 0181 291 2924 or 0181 291 2925 or 0181 291 2926 or 0181 291 2927 or 0181 291 2928 or 0181 291 2929 or 0181 291 2930 or 0181 291 2931 or 0181 291 2932 or 0181 291 2933 or 0181 291 2934 or 0181 291 2935 or 0181 291 2936 or 0181 291 2937 or 0181 291 2938 or 0181 291 2939 or 0181 291 2940 or 0181 291 2941 or 0181 291 2942 or 0181 291 2943 or 0181 291 2944 or 0181 291 2945 or 0181 291 2946 or 0181 291 2947 or 0181 291 2948 or 0181 291 2949 or 0181 291 2950 or 0181 291 2951 or 0181 291 2952 or 0181 291 2953 or 0181 291 2954 or 0181 291 2955 or 0181 291 2956 or 0181 291 2957 or 0181 291 2958 or 0181 291 2959 or 0181 291 2960 or 0181 291 2961 or 0181 291 2962 or 0181 291 2963 or 0181 291 2964 or 0181 291 2965 or 0181 291 2966 or 0181 291 2967 or 0181 291 2968 or 0181 291 2969 or 0181 291 2970 or 0181 291 2971 or 0181 291 2972 or 0181 291 2973 or 0181 291 2974 or 0181 291 2975 or 0181 291 2976 or 0181 291 2977 or 0181 291 2978 or 0181 291 2979 or 0181 291 2980 or 0181 291 2981 or 0181 291 2982 or 0181 291 2983 or 0181 291 2984 or 0181 291 2985 or 0181 291 2986 or 0181 291 2987 or 0181 291 2988 or 0181 291 2989 or 0181 291 2990 or 0181 291 2991 or 0181 291 2992 or 0181 291 2993 or 0181 291 2994 or 0181 291 2995 or 0181 291 2996 or 0181 291 2997 or 0181 291 2998 or 0181 291 2999 or 0181 291 2900 or 0181 291 2901 or 0181 291 2902 or 0181 291 2903 or 0181 291 2904 or 0181 291 2905 or 0181 291 2906 or 0181 291 2907 or 0181 291 2908 or 0181 291 2909 or 0181 291 2910 or 0181 291 2911 or 0181 291 2912 or 0181 291 2913 or 0181 291 2914 or 0181 291 2915 or 0181 291 2916 or 0181 291 2917 or 0181 291 2918 or 0181 291 2919 or 0181 291 2920 or 0181 291 2921 or 0181 291 2922 or 0181 291 2923 or 0181 291 2924 or 0181 291 2925 or 0181 291 2926 or 0181 291 2927 or 0181 291 2928 or 0181 291 2929 or 0181 291 2930 or 0181 291 2931 or 0181 291 2932 or 0181 291 2933 or 0181 291 2934 or 0181 291 2935 or 0181 291 2936 or 0181 291 2937 or 0181 291 2938 or 0181 291 2939 or 0181 291 2940 or 0181 291



# business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098  
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

FINANCIAL JOURNAL  
OF THE YEAR

## Guinness acts to foil Arnault assault

Andrew Yates

Bernard Arnault was last night having to rethink his strategy to block the £23bn merger between Guinness and Grand Metropolitan, as the two UK drinks companies threatened to make a radical change to the terms of the deal.

Guinness and Grand Metropolitan said that they were prepared to raise the level of shareholder support needed to block the deal to 50 per cent, even though they would face an extra tax bill of up to £70m. Mr Arnault, who heads the LVMH luxury goods group in France, has been increasing his stake in GrandMet and lobbying for support from institutions to muster a blocking vote – which is 25 per cent under the current bid terms.

More than £1bn have been spent by LVMH on building up a 11.06 per cent stake in GrandMet, and Mr Arnault now faces the prospect of having to spend billions more if he sticks with the same tactics.

The potentially fatal blow made against Mr Arnault's campaign yesterday came just 24 hours after the combative Frenchman claimed the merger was dead in the water, and claims that he could muster support from institutional shareholders to reach the 25 per cent blocking target. Analysts said it Mr Arnault would struggle to command more than 50 per cent of the vote.

Philip Yea, Guinness' finance director, said: "If we find it rock in the road we can drive around it. We have made sure we have done our homework and we have contingencies in hand to deal with Mr Arnault. An extra

£70m of stamp duty is a drop in the ocean compared to what we can gain from a merger of GrandMet and Guinness." Anthony Greener, chairman of Guinness, added: "This deal will go through. It will create £4bn of extra value for our shareholders."

However, LVMH claimed that it could still scupper the deal. "We believe we can stop the deal with 25 per cent of the vote. It would give us the power to prevent the transfer of assets between GrandMet and Guinness among other things," a spokesman said yesterday.

GrandMet and Guinness yesterday also slammed Mr Arnault's alternative proposal to form a wines and spirits business, incorporating Moët Hennessy, the spirits subsidiary of LVMH, the IDV business of Guinness and the United Distillers arm of Guinness. The plan would involve the merger of Pilsbury and Burger King, GrandMet's food manufacturing and fast food businesses, and the brewing arm of Guinness.

GrandMet and Guinness vehemently ruled out any imminent demergers, claiming they would destroy £1.5bn of shareholder value. Analysts believe the total merger bill could easily top £2bn due to the loss of purchasing power economies in the group.

John McGrath, chief executive of GrandMet, said: "These proposals from LVMH would destroy shareholder value, primarily due to the US tax costs of separating these businesses. No board in their right mind would be prepared to do a deal that would destroy £1.5bn of shareholder value and then have



Tony Greener, chairman of Guinness (left), and George Bull, his GrandMet counterpart, claim the deal will succeed

pay a premium for Moët Hennessy."

Mr McGrath accepted that the three way merger of the spirits business would bring extra cost savings of £65m over and above the £175m that GMG Brands would create. But he denounced Mr Arnault's demands for a 35 per cent stake in a combined spirits group and cast aspersions on LVMH's projections that the

spirits group would bring in extra revenue of £65m. "Mr Arnault's proposals involve transferring £130m of shareholder value from GMG shareholders to LVMH shareholders. The revenue benefits that LVMH predict are unrealistic according to our analysis," he said.

A fund manager at one of GrandMet's institutional shareholders said: "Mr Arnault will

have to come up with something substantially better than he has put on the table so far to get enough support for his ideas. At the moment, we are clearly siding with the management and I expect most of the other large shareholders are too."

Mr Arnault has indicated he is willing to take a lower stake in a combined spirits group by swapping some of his Moët

Hennessy assets and shareholdings in GrandMet and Guinness for a stake in the demerged food and brewing interests. He would also consider a watertight commitment from GMG Brands, the planned new name of the merged Guinness and GrandMet groups, to demerge businesses in the future.

GrandMet and Guinness are

Calls for Pitcher to resign at United Utilities

Nigel Cope

City Correspondent

Shareholders in United Utilities called on the company's chairman, Sir Desmond Pitcher, to resign yesterday at an ill-tempered annual meeting in Manchester. Shareholders also criticised the level of executive pay and demanded shorter contracts for directors to minimise the cost of any future boardroom departures.

It was also announced yesterday that Sir Dick Evans, the British Aerospace chief executive, is to join the board as a non-executive director, in a move seen as a victory for institutions keen to reduce Sir Desmond's boardroom power.

The row at the AGM came after Sir Desmond refused to tell shareholders why the United Utilities board had ousted chief executive, Brian Staples, on Monday after it passed a vote of no-confidence in him.

To a round of applause from the floor, one shareholder told Sir Desmond: "This is the second chief executive officer that we have lost under your chairmanship and I do not think, therefore, you should remain as chairman of the company if you will not justify your actions."

George Bull, GrandMet's chairman, said: "This is a bit like the tail wagging the dog. Moët Hennessy would only increase the size of the spirits portfolio by 3 per cent and the size of the wines and spirits business by 6 per cent. It is tiny relative to the deal we are talking about."

Photographs: Nicola Kurtz

willing to push ahead with the merger without Moët Hennessy.

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chairman, said: "This is a bit like the tail wagging the dog. Moët Hennessy would only increase the size of the spirits portfolio by 3 per cent and the size of the wines and spirits business by 6 per cent. It is tiny relative to the deal we are talking about."

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Mr Staples, one of the so-called "fat cats" of the utilities sector, left abruptly on Monday amid suggestions of boardroom concern over his private life. The company has denied that Mr Staples' decision to leave his wife and move in with his Sir Desmond's former secretary was a factor in his departure.

Mr Staples is line for a payoff of around £600,000. His predecessor Bob Thian, who left three years ago, departed with £60,000 in compensation.

Asked later if he had ever considered resigning, Sir Desmond said: "Quite simply, no. Certainly not when I played a major part in taking it [the company] from £1.2bn to almost a £4bn company and a major multi-utility."

He claimed he and Mr Staples had parted on good terms: "There is no personal animosity and there never has been any. He left the company on Monday and we shook hands. It's like losing a friend. It's a sad moment. But life goes on. None of us is indispensable."

Sir Desmond rejected claims that institutions had put pressure on him to stand down to a non-executive role. "There were calls for a change in my role at the AGM a year ago. Subsequent to that we have met all our institutional shareholders. They understand our roles and we've not heard anything from them on this issue."

Sir Desmond also attacked the windfall tax. He said it would trigger a "comprehensive review" of discretionary revenue and capital expenditure, customer rebates and voluntary compensation schemes. United shares closed up 2.5p at 733.5p.

## Economists bet on fourth rise in rates

Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

The economy is expanding fast enough to make it odds-on that the cost of borrowing will soon rise for the fourth month running. City economists have concluded.

Figures for gross domestic product, the widest measure of the economy, showed that it grew at an uncomfortable pace in the second quarter of the year. Although manufacturing output was flat in the three months to June, services such as management consultancy, transport and retailing are booming.

The last important official figures before the next meeting of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee on 7 August, they are expected to have a crucial influence on its decision. Most City experts reckon the committee will opt for a fourth quarter-point rise in interest rates to 7 per cent despite the pain that the strong pound is inflicting on exporters.

That might stay the hand of the committee, but it would merely delay the inevitable," said Kevin Darlington at Hacre Gowt.

According to the Office for National Statistics, GDP in-

creased by 0.9 per cent in the second quarter of the year, taking it to a level 3.4 per cent higher than a year earlier. The quarterly increase was the same as in January to March but lower than the 1.1 per cent rise in the final quarter of last year.

However, annual growth has picked up from 2.9 per cent at the end of 1996, compared with a trend rate of 2.3 to 2.5 per cent. It is widely expected to climb further as the year progresses, fuelled by the windfall building society shares, rising incomes and falling unemployment.

Full details on the latest quarter are not yet available, but total output of the service industries rose by 1.3 per cent and 4.5 per cent year on year. The

growth was widespread, the ONS said, but strongest in business services such as management consultancy and computer services. Transport and communication, and distribution, hotels and catering also expanded rapidly.

In sharp contrast, manufacturing output was roughly flat in the second quarter. It fell in May, but the ONS indicated that it has recovered somewhat in June.

The unbalanced nature of the building boom has alarmed economists. Some predict a sharp slowdown in 1998, when the windfall has been and gone, the overvalued pound finally eats into export volumes and the buoyant consumer spending and services than on the early

evidence of weaker exports and manufacturing industry.

"With the Bank's sights set firmly on the future – and in particular on the likely impact of windfall payoffs on high street spending – further rises in interest rates over the coming months look certain," said Jonathan Loynes at HSBC Markets.

David Bloom at James Capel

warned that the latest figures did not yet include any sizeable impact from windfall gains. "In the third quarter they should come through by the bucket-load, pushing the service sector to levels where inflation pressures will further exert themselves," he said.

Few see any hope of relief from the strong pound in the near future, although it did dip yesterday following reports that two big banks had been selling sterling. It fell to just over DM3.05 before rallying. Its index against a range of currencies ended 0.1 lower at 106.2.

The remaining figures due before 7 August – consumer credit and the CBI's distributive trades survey on the one hand and industrial output along with the monthly purchasing managers survey on the other – are not expected to alter the balance of the Bank's decision.

A new technology index this autumn to track shares in some of the UK's most innovative and fastest-growing stocks is set to be introduced in the autumn by FTSE International, the body that decides how companies are classified on the UK stock market. FTSE International is also considering a separate classification for biotechnology companies.

Steven Vale at FTSE International, jointly owned by the London Stock Exchange and the *Financial Times*, said there was growing need for independent technology indices like those that exist on US exchanges. "Fund managers want to develop specialist funds to tap companies which may have fast growth potential. Demand for a technology index is increasing."

The plan to single out biotechnology companies would not create a separate biotech index, but allow investors to identify biotech from "regular" pharmaceutical companies. Biotech will be defined as those at the leading edge of research with a focus on R&D.

It would not be based on market capitalisation. As biotechs developed they would be reclassified as pharmaceutical companies, defined as those like Glaxo Wellcome which make and market drugs as well as develop them.

Although details of the names and number of companies qualifying for the technology index have not yet been finalised, a range of stock market sectors will be represented including all the biotech groups. Within the media sector, electronic data publishers, like perhaps MAID, will be included. From support services, companies to be included are Internet groups, information technology consultancies and services companies and producers and distributors of computer software, Mr Vale said.

Likely candidates are Sema, Logic, Parity, Fl and RM.

The definition of engineering companies to be included are producers of components and equipment for the aircraft and defence sector. The technology index would be a sub-sector of existing classifications and companies would also be represented in their original sectors.

Bank. The arrests followed a car chase during which they had thrown from the car various items of incriminating evidence, including a mobile phone used to phone up target companies.

The scam continued even after they were arrested and told they had been captured on video researching target companies at Companies House and delivering forged letters. Knowing this, they continued to seek information from Companies House by post while on bail and arranged for the letters to be delivered by taxi drivers.

Christopher Lewis, a lawyer at the

USDA inspected us in April and again in May. We have a clean bill of health.

Deals in Huntingdon's

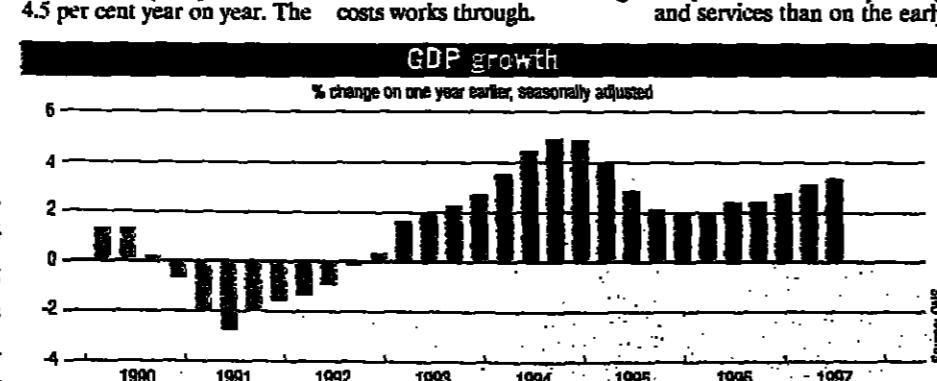
shares were suspended yesterday. The company has until November to meet 16 stringent conditions imposed by the Home Office before it can apply for a new licence. Mr Cliffe said the company had already met many of the demands. "We are confident we can complete all the necessary changes."

Several of Huntingdon's customers said that they would wait to see if the company was successful in re-applying for its licence before awarding new business. A spokesman for Novartis said: "We won't be placing any new studies with them and we will be monitoring existing studies more carefully."

Merck, the US drugs giant confirmed that the company did use Huntingdon in the UK but had not yet decided whether to commission any new contracts.

SmithKline Beecham said: "Our confidence in them has been completely dented. We won't be giving them any further work."

Christopher Lewis, Huntingdon's chief executive, said that he was confident the group would continue trading in its



Source: ONS

## Sentences for fraudsters caught by spelling error

Tom Stevenson  
Financial Editor

An elaborate plot to defraud the banking system ended at Birmingham Crown Court yesterday with prison sentences for the scam's ringleaders. The court also ordered the seizure of a BMW car belonging to one of the gang which had been used in a car chase across Oxfordshire as the police moved in on the ring in March 1996.

Sanjeev Rana was sentenced to three years, while his accomplices, Sukhbir Virk and Satwant

Basi, received jail terms of 12 months each. A fourth defendant, Deepak Panwar, will serve 12 months' detention in a young offenders' institution. Rajeev Rana, the owner of the BMW, is to be sentenced in January. The scam perpetrated by the ring involved forging letters of authority from one of a bank's commercial customers, requesting the transfer of money from account to another account at a different bank. The account of the funds usually goes to keep a percentage of the money.

Philip Lewis, a lawyer at the Serious Fraud Office, which brought the case to the West Midlands Police Fraud Squad, said: "This fraud was alarmingly simple to carry out. Had the defendants succeeded in all of

their dishonest efforts the loss would have been over £7m." After his arrest Sukhbir Virk told police he had become involved in the fraud because he had no money "with Sanjeev [Rana] you go out to bars, drink champagne, get girls, live a life". One of the stooges whose accounts were used to collect the money, Richard Culverhouse, was yesterday fined £1,000 and ordered to pay £1,000 in costs. He had £2,000 worth of assets seized which are to be paid to National Westminster Bank.

Between December 1995 and

May 1996 the big clearing banks were defrauded of almost £2m. They were only stopped after a simple spelling mistake repeated on each of the 131 separate letters sent by the gang linked all the attempts. The recurrent use of the mis-spelt "sincerly" when signing off the letters demonstrated all the fraudulent transactions were connected.

On 11 March 1996, Rana and Virk were arrested and charged at Wantage in Oxfordshire, where Virk had just delivered one of the forged letters of authority to a branch of Barclays

Bank. The arrests followed a car chase during which they had thrown from the car various items of incriminating evidence, including a mobile phone used to phone up target companies.

The scam continued even after they were arrested and told they had been captured on video researching target companies at Companies House and delivering forged letters. Knowing this, they continued to seek information from Companies House by post while on bail and arranged for the letters to be delivered by taxi drivers.

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Statistics as of 25 July

STOCK MARKETS						

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JEREMY WARNER

"No right-thinking person would these days feel comfortable with the idea of un-elected trade unionists running the country. Why should we feel any happier if it is businessmen pulling the levers of power?"

## Why government and business don't really mix

**B**usinessmen and industrialists are cropping up in Government all over the place these days. It's all part of Tony Blair's new "inclusive" approach to running the country. Nobody would argue too much about the idea of this, even if New Labour's beholden view of the "can do" attributes of successful businessmen sometimes seems a trifle naive. Business can teach government a lot about effective decision-making, problem-solving and the needs of the economy.

But in the end public policy is for civil servants and the politicians who control them, and business is for businessmen: the two usually and rightly make uneasy bedfellows. No right-thinking person would these days feel comfortable with the idea of un-elected trade unionists running the country. Why should we feel any happier if it is businessmen pulling the levers of power? Within their own organisations, their control is already almost absolute. Do we really want them dictating public policy, too?

Even accepting that they do have a valuable contribution to make to formulating policy (which they plainly do), the appointment of particular individuals to key positions carries obvious dangers. The potential for conflict of interest and embarrassment is already apparent.

One of Mr Blair's business buddies – Robert Ayling, chief executive of British Airways – already finds himself embroiled in

strike action, his handling of which has so far proved questionable, to put it at its most charitable. Now Martin Taylor, chief executive of Barclays Bank and recently appointed to head the Government's review of tax and benefit, finds himself facing strike action, too. It would be silly to suggest Mr Blair's association with these two people means the Government is wholly in support of whatever they do in their own businesses. Cronyism nonetheless invariably involves a set of shared views, attitudes and a high degree of mutual support. One man's inclusion is another's exclusion.

Nor is it just the forces of Old Labour that feel disturbed by it all. John Redwood's attack on Lord Simon, minister for competitiveness in Europe, may seem nit-picking and petty, but the former BP chairman was indeed less open than he should have been about his substantial shareholding in BP, and arguably he shouldn't have the shares at all now that he is a government minister. Furthermore, the wider potential for conflict of interest in Lord Simon's position is only too obvious in a world where the power and influence of the oil companies is a constant source of controversy and friction.

The same sort of niggling doubt might be expressed about the appointment of Peter Davis to head up the welfare to work review. He's the man from the Pensions Fund, which least it be forgotten has one of the worst

records in the industry in clearing up the pensions mis-selling scandal. Strangely, the Pensions Fund has been largely untouched by the "name and shame" campaign to force the industry into action launched by Helen Lidell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury.

The Government may also have underestimated the degree to which these appointments would anger businessmen not summoned to the burdens of public office. The latest example of this effect is the grandly named "Music industry and new Creative Industries Task Force" being established by Chris Smith, the Heritage Secretary. Mr Smith announced the task force at the same time as changing the name of his department to the Stalinist-sounding Department of Culture, Media and Sport. "My department's old name was backward-looking and did not do justice to the range of work we cover," Mr Smith insisted. "Fee-free, went everyone in the music industry."

Until they learnt who was going to be on the task force, that is. With Richard Branson, Sir David Puttnam, Alan McGee (of Creation Records) and various other assembled heavies nicely tucked in to the action, the task force begins to look more like an opportunity for the promotion of self-interest than anything else. This observation would seem a little unfair but for the fact that the task force's objective has been defined as that of increasing "creative activity and

excellence in the UK". Wooliness like this rather invites such cynicism. That's certainly not the sort of music industry views it.

I shouldn't perhaps be overly critical about all this. The Government is at least showing willing in attempting to establish a partnership with business. Moreover, the attempt to engage traditionally detached business people in finding solutions to complex social and economic problems is one that obviously deserves support. On the other hand, the Government may be stirring up all kinds of trouble for itself with its business-led task forces. You can hardly blame business people for getting upset when their main competitor is helping to set government policy.

**W**hat ever happened to "irrational exuberance"? You remember. That was the thing Alan Greenspan went on about late last year when the Dow Jones Industrial Average was at just 6,400. If the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board thought the market was too high then, what does he think now with the Dow more than 25 per cent higher at more than 8,000?

Whatever it is, he's not saying. He was silent on the matter during his Congressional testimony this week. There was no talk of a stock market bubble, or of pricking it with a sharp rise in rates. Indeed, he had nothing but praise for the US economy, which

seems to be jogging along with the ease of a highly trained long-distance runner.

So has he changed his mind? Or is it simply that he doesn't want to be the cause of a stock market crash, as he nearly was last time he opened his mouth on the matter? It is probably a combination of the two. Mr Greenspan has already qualified his remarks about irrational exuberance in markets by suggesting the exuberance could be justified by strong earnings growth. That is what corporate US seems to be delivering right now.

Even so, you have to believe the business cycle has been abolished for good to think stock prices justified at these levels. Perhaps because the US is the US – easily capable of accommodating the whackiest of sects and ideas – there are some quite respectable economists who actually believe this. Most of us will continue to take a rather more sceptical view, however, and for us, awaiting a big stock market correction has become a bit like waiting for the death of Deng Xiaoping. Everyone knows it will happen eventually. It is just a question of when.

Personally I'm rather hoping it won't be for fortnight or so yet, because I wouldn't want to miss the fun. I'm off to France for a few weeks to take advantage of the so-called "away pound", another phenomenon lamentably unlikely to last for long. Unless, of course, you believe that Britain too has discovered economic nirvana. Mmm.

## £140,000 fine faces M&E in pensions mis-selling blitz

Nic Cawthill  
Personal Finance Editor

**T**he Personal Investment Authority, the financial services regulator, is poised to confirm its hardening stance against pensions mis-selling by levying a £140,000 fine against M&E Network, a large group of independent financial advisers.

Details of the fine, against M&E, which is in the final stages of being formalised, comes days after *The Independent* revealed that another network, DBS Financial Management, was about to face a record £500,000 penalty.

Simon Hudson, chairman of M&E, yesterday declined to comment on the impending fine against his own network. However, he said: "We have had no problem with training and competence of compliance vis-à-vis the PIA."

"Like everyone else, we have been through the example from the PIA's pensions review team. We are as vulnerable to that as anyone."

He added that he would be calling for an inquiry by the PIA into how decisions on mis-selling were allegedly being made before the disciplinary bodies that were supposed to agree them had even met.

A PIA spokesman refused

to comment on any aspect of the regulator's disciplinary strategy.

The latest fine, the second-largest to date, will be the third against networks of independent advisers. A few weeks ago, the PIA fined Berkeley, another firm, £50,000 over the same issue. The fines are certain to raise questions about whether large networks can deliver effective controls on their members.

Networks which have grown substantially since the PIA was formed in 1994, are supposed to offer the safety of centralised compliance controls in return for some commission income. Yet last week, DBS Financial Management, chaired by Ken Davy who is also a leading figure within the financial services industry and sits on the PIA board, was revealed to be in the regulator's sights. DBS, which has 1,700 member firms with 2,500 individual advisers, is the largest network of advisers in the UK.

M&E, formed in November 1987, is the second-largest, with about 330 firms employing 650 advisers. Average commission income is £73,000 per member, with the network as a whole taking more than £22.5m in commission income last year. The firm's members have more than 70,000 clients among them.

A recent survey on behalf of *Money Marketing*, a financial magazine, showed that M&E has the highest proportion of former "bed agents" and the smallest number of IFAs as members.

Tied agents are ex-salespeople who were allowed to sell the products of only a single company. By contrast, IFAs can advise on any product.

Industry observers were surprised yesterday by the looming fine against M&E. Unlike other networks, it does not allow members to place business directly with a product provider.

All proposals have to be referred to the company's head office in Leeds, where they are checked and only then referred to the relevant financial provider. This should ensure far tighter controls over the firm's members, something that M&E had previously claimed as a particular strength.

One member of a rival network, who would not be named, queried whether M&E's controls were as strict at head office level as had been claimed.

But Mr Hudson said: "This would have nothing to do with our compliance systems." More firms were facing problems less with the extent of any pensions mis-selling than with the speed at which it was being cleared up.

### Who will be in EMU? The financial markets' view



## French budget on target for EMU

Magnus Grindon

The budget measures unveiled at the start of the week to keep France within Maastricht deficit limits seem to have sharply increased confidence in the great monetary union project.

Swingeing corporate tax increases and cuts in spending look like squeezing the French economy to within a few tenths of a point of the deficit target of 3 per cent this year. But the money markets, now clearly banking on a broad EMU coming in on time in 1999, voted with their feet, driving the mark yet lower against safe-haven currencies, notably the dollar and sterling.

The mark has lost close to 5 pence against the US currency over the past week, taking its depreciation since the start of the year to 19 per cent.

Even so, Martin Brooks of Goldman Sachs reckons the market has factored in an "overly optimistic" 86 per cent probability of EMU meeting the deadline. It is a relative scepticism shared by many of our panel.

But our economists diverge over where the mark will go from here. Several pointed to hints the Bundesbank will raise rates to defend it, but Stephen King of James Capel said their research suggested a DM2 dollar if Spain and Italy are included in the first phase of EMU.

The latest black cloud to over-

### IN BRIEF

#### ScotAm takeover claims senior victim

The fall-out from the takeover by Prudential of Scottish Amicable claimed its most senior victim yesterday with the resignation of Paul Bradshaw, the Scottish life company's deputy managing director. Mr Bradshaw, who joined ScotAm from J Rothschild International in 1994, became deputy to the company's managing director, Roy Nicolson, in November last year. He had been seen as Mr Nicolson's successor in the event of ScotAm's planned flotation and would have been in line for a share and cash bonus worth more than £1m had it taken place.

Sources said that Prudential's successful takeover and the amalgamation of key areas of ScotAm's operations with those of the PIA had reduced Mr Bradshaw's role to the point where there was little option for him other than to leave. A ScotAm spokesman said that although he would give up his job immediately, Mr Bradshaw would remain on the company's board until 1 October and would continue to advise Mr Nicolson until then.

#### SFA orders broker to stop trading

The Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) has ordered Manchester stockbroker John Siddall to cease trading for failing to maintain adequate financial resources.

The broker has been told to stop trading immediately and to arrange for clients and the management of their accounts to be transferred to another firm. The SFA said that Siddall had informed it on a number of occasions that it would rectify its financial position, hit by a £600,000 loss on a speculative Canadian share, but it had failed to do so. Last month two of Siddall's former directors were expelled from the SFA register of directors following a reprimand for the firm relating to share-dealing in Anglia Television.

#### Pendragon buys rival outlets for £44m

Motor dealer Pendragon has paid rival Lex £44m for 17 volume car dealerships in a deal which both sides claim will make them more profitable. Pendragon is also investing £22m over the next three years in building up the businesses it has bought, a further £2.5m expanding its Ford franchise in North London and the Home Counties and £1.6m in buying or opening additional outlets. The programme will make Pendragon the biggest single Ford and Vauxhall dealer in the UK. Pendragon's plans are being financed by a rights issue of four new shares at 265p for every seven held to raise £5m. The businesses Pendragon is buying made a profit of £3.4m before interest on turnover of £350m in 1996.

#### Blacks Leisure sales jump 10%

The Blacks Leisure sports equipment and fashion retailer said that like-for-like sales in the 20 weeks to 19 July climbed by 10 per cent compared with the same period a year earlier. Simon Ben, chairman, also told the annual meeting that Fila UK and O'Neill were continuing to make good progress. Like-for-like sales at First Sport, the group's sports retail chain, was up 11 per cent over the previous year, in line with expectations. Blacks Outdoor, the group's outdoor leisure retailer, also reported an 11 per cent rise in like-for-like sales assisted by the unseasonably wet start to the summer. The group said it had opened nine stores since May and shut three. It has 125 stores.

#### Midlothian trims losses

Heart of Midlothian, the recently floated Scottish football club, reported reduced losses of £1.1m in the year to 31 March, down from £1.4m. Turnover increased by 13 per cent to £4.9m and the company said it was using the £5m float proceeds to modernise the stadium and improve the playing squad. Season ticket sales have boomed with 8,000 sold for the current season. This compares with just over 3,000 two years ago.

#### Zenith Media

In an article about Zenith Media in yesterday's edition it was incorrectly stated that Christine Walker was previously group chief executive.

Her position before she left Zenith a few months ago was as chief executive of the London office. Morgan Stanley, the US investment bank, is acting independently from Zenith in attempting to find a buyer for the group. Zenith says it has no plans to float on the stock market.

## BI bid for Cortworth to make chief £8m richer

Cathy Newman

The chief executive of Cortworth, the specialist engineering group, stands to share more than £8m with his family, the spoils of a £9.3m agreed bid being made for the company by BI Group.

Bill McMurray, Cortworth's chief executive, with his family, owns in excess of 4 million shares, will take £8.3m from the deal. BI Group, which specialises in engineering products, has pitched its offer at 196p per Cortworth share. Graham Wagner, the finance director, and his family will gain £4.48m, and the chairman, Roger Ellington, will pick up £2.056m. Cortworth only floated on the stock market in December 1995, two years after Mr McMurray led a management buy-out from Williams Holdings.

## Rain hits Hozelock forecasts

Magnus Grindon

First it was drought, now it is flood – either way, the British weather has not been kind to Hozelock, the country's biggest maker of garden hoses. Yesterday its shares plunged 75p to 280p, knocking £19m off the company's market value, after it warned that the wettest June this century had hammered sales in what is normally the best selling season of the year. Not surprisingly, people have just not been buying hoses and the pain has continued into July, which with June, normally represents a quarter of the group's annual turnover.

Analysts wiped around £4m from their profit forecasts for this year in the light of the warning, leaving expectations at around £6.5m to £7m. The latest black cloud to over-

shadow Hozelock has scuttled in from a blue sky. Earlier this year it was fears over the exceptionally dry spring which were hitting the share price, amid reports that the UK was "enjoying" the driest two years since the 18th century. The possibility that the water companies would have to reintroduce widespread hosepipe bans sent the shares spiralling downwards from a high of 483p in February, prompting the company to issue a statement in April that in fact it was enjoying "ideal selling conditions" of good weather with fewer water restrictions. Trading was said to be "substantially" ahead of last year.

All that has gone into reverse since June, which was a "diabolical month" according to Hozelock's chief executive, David Codling. The period totted up total rainfall of 113mm, three-times the long-run average and getting on for four-times the 31mm recorded in June 1996. To add to Hozelock's woes, the strong pound is hitting the third of its sales exported to Europe.

Although half the foreign business is covered by hedging contracts taken out last September, the currency effect would shear £1m from profits this year, the company warned. Geoff Douglas of Barclays de Zoete Wedd said trading may come back next year, assuming a more normal summer, but there could be a much bigger impact from currency. He expects to cut his 1998 forecast from £12m to around £8m.

Hozelock said the recent departure of operations director Paul Snowden, who sold 29,800-worth of shares at 426p in June, had no connection with the latest profits warning.

### Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	DMark
US	87.73	15.16	56.53
Canada	2.3538	71.05	1.0000
Germany	3.345	1.0000	1.0000
France	2.9550	340.320	0.6754
Italy	2.9550	340.320	0.6754
Spain	2.9550	340.320	0.6754
Australia	2.2712	1.0000	1.0000
Hong Kong	4.6234	34.24	1.0000
New Zealand	2.5670	2.14	1.0000
Saudi Arabia	6.2708	1.0000	1.0000
Singapore	2.4740	48.44	1.0000

### Interest Rates

Country	Sterling	1 month	3 months	Spot



# Traversoni profits from foul play on the line

## Cycling

ROBIN NICHOLL  
with the Tour de France

Mario Traversoni sprinted hard because he thought was third place when the Tour de France arrived in Dijon, unaware that he was to be the winner.

"It is unbelievable," the Italian said 20 minutes later when he was invited to step onto the podium in place of Bart Voskamp.

The Dutchman had crossed the line first after clashing with the German, Jens Heppner, but after studying the race film the jury took away their first and second placings, the third disqualification of the Tour.

Heppner's team-mate Erik Zabel was relegated to 14th place for blocking Dutchman Jeroen Blijlevens, and five days later the Ukrainian Sergei Ouschkov was relegated for cutting across Laurent Desbiens at Perpignan.

Twenty-six seconds before Traversoni inched clear of a bustling

sprint, Voskamp had cut across Heppner, who responded by leaning on him. They raced for several metres with the German's shoulder almost on Voskamp's hip. Heppner was in danger of falling, but finally they parted and Voskamp coasted over first.

"It is a crazy decision to give it to someone who comes in 26 seconds after us," Heppner said, but Voskamp was more vociferous.

"It is unbelievable," he said, "these people who make a laughing stock of the Tour. I deviated two centimetres from my line and they take away my victory."

Heppner responded and they raced away to spice a day which was otherwise as flat as the roads they were covering.

The jury placed Voskamp and Heppner 10th and 11th, with Van Petegem relegated to 14th. The published result read strangely, with Traversoni and the eight placed behind him 26 seconds in arrears. The result for Voskamp and Heppner showed them as having lost no time, while Van Petegem was 26 seconds behind, sandwiched between a rider 37

seconds ahead and the main field at 17:57.

A revised result then put Van Petegem into 12th place, avoiding the anomaly of having a rider with a smaller time loss between two with bigger deficits.

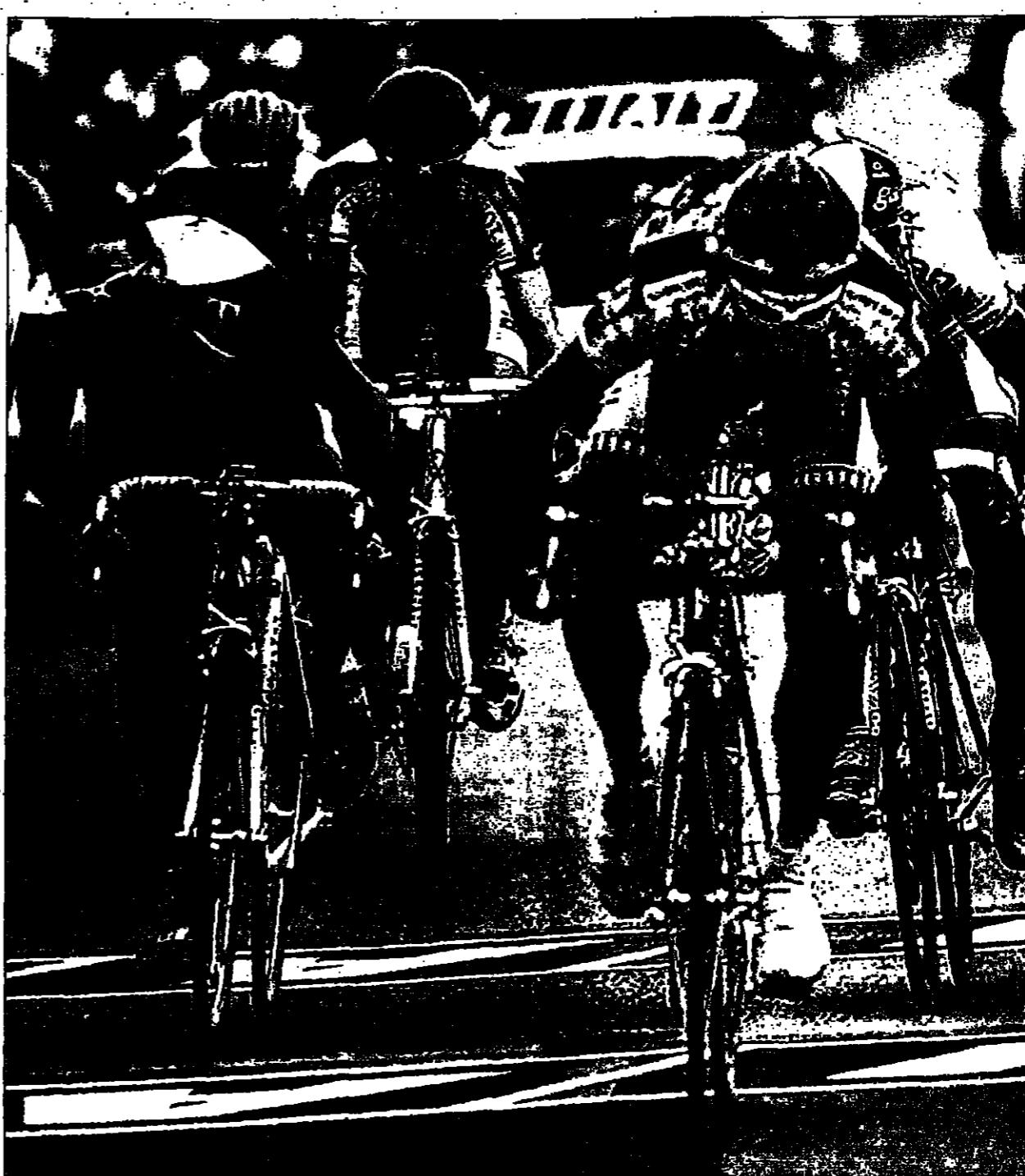
A Mickey Mouse affair, but why not? The Tour is due in Disneyoland today, and it seems some have got there a day early. Amid Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Goofy, and Donald Duck, today will be deadly serious for Ulrich.

He can boost his victory margin in a time trial at the Disney complex near Paris. Currently he is 2min 22sec clear of Richard Virenque, and a repeat of last year at St Emilion is anticipated.

Then, he clocked 50.446km to beat Miguel Indurain by 56 seconds and prompted Goderroot to tip him at the next Tour winner.

TOUR DE FRANCE 2000 (cont'd) - **Stage 19** (cont'd) - **Stage 20** (cont'd) - **Stage 21** (cont'd)

TOUR DE FRANCE 2000 (cont'd) - **Stage 19** (cont'd) - **Stage 20** (cont'd) - **Stage 21** (cont'd)



Mario Traversoni (right) wins the sprint for third place in the Tour yesterday. The Italian was later declared the winner after Bart Voskamp and Jens Heppner were disqualified for dangerous sprinting

Photograph: AFP

Yesterday: Stage 19

Today: Stage 20

Tomorrow: Stage 21

## Robinson fills vacancy

### Cricket

DAVID LLEWELLYN  
reports from Chelmsford  
Worcestershire 394 & 99-5  
Essex 451

The boots that Darren Robinson has to step into may be a pretty daunting size, but at least the cap fits. Robinson, 24, revealed tenacity, timing and temperament as he compiled a career-best 148, his first for the year and only the third of his career. If anyone had any doubts about his ability to take over the vacant opening spot from Graham Gooch, those fears should have been dispelled yesterday.

It was quite an occasion for Robinson, topped off for him when the Essex captain, Paul Prichard, presented the civil engineer with his county cap during the tea interval. On the evidence of his mammoth six-and-a-half hours at the crease, Robinson is unlikely to miss many chances to fill his boots, even if doing the same with Gooch's takes a while longer. It had been a peculiar day. It

had a strange enough start and a bizarre end. Worcestershire contrived to lose three wickets in 17 balls to leave themselves facing almost certain defeat today. They had begun their second innings 57 runs behind and lost openers Tim Curtis and Tom Moody before they were level. Disaster then struck shortly before the close when Stuart Laws' leg-slip accounted for the first and second-choice nightwatchmen Steven Rhodes and Gavin Haynes in three balls.

And before any of that, Peter Williams, the Essex secretary-manager, made an official statement to the effect that neither the club nor himself were in any way annoyed at the manner in which Gooch had announced his retirement (through a Sunday newspaper article).

It was then revealed that Gooch was spending that part of the day signing 300 scorecards in gold ink, the limited edition to be sold at £5 each within 15 minutes of the end of the match today, the proceeds to go 50 per cent to the club and at Gooch's insistence, the balance to a contribution to Alan Liley's benefit fund. A nice gesture.

It had been a peculiar day. It

had a start only to a way of getting out. Each dismissal merely brought fiercer concentration and a tightening of his belt from the start, but just when Vandrau must have been bracing himself for a test of nerve, Maynard flicked him to mid-wicket when Adrian Rollins had a tumbling catch.

A piece of quick thinking by Paul Aldred ran out Tony Cottee from silly point, when the batsman overbalanced after bowling Vandrau and at this point DeFreitas produced something for the cognoscenti by bowling a spell to Gary Butcher without a solitary fielder in the leg side.

He proved his point, too, by getting him caught at slip. If Adrian Shaw had been stumped off Vandrau, Glamorgan would have been 257 for 7, still 107 short of the follow on figure.

By the time Shaw played on to Devon Malcolm, only 52 were needed. When the target was achieved with the aid of a full-blooded pull for four from Dale it probably, for once, suited both sides.

Gooch's credit these were not as prolific in these dismally poor conditions, as they had been earlier. Phil DeFreitas has handled affairs with imagination since inheriting the captaincy and it did not take him long to discover an acceptable formula of using his quicker bowlers with the breeze at their backs and the often neglected off spin of Mathew Vandrau at the other end.

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# sport

KING GEORGE VI & QUEEN ELIZABETH DIAMOND STAKES: A power-packed French challenger can prove best in the world

## Helissio to seize heavyweight title

RICHARD EDMONDSON

Racing Correspondent

They run for the diamonds this afternoon, and then the diamonds run for us. Whoever wins Ascot's ladies' race and its bejewelled prizes will, uniquely, remember the day for that contest. Everyone else will talk about a King George VI & Queen Elizabeth Stakes which is stocked with great treasures. In racing nothing is certain, though it appears this afternoon's encounter can only be an anticlimax if Michael Stoute carries out his ghastly suggestion of removing Pilsudski from the battle. The Newmarket trainer walked the Ascot pastures on Thursday and advised punters to back the five-year-old "with a run". Stoute will expect better timing from his jockeys today than he managed himself as racing has been talking about, and betting on, nothing else but the King George for a week now.

If Pilsudski does bring his bulky form to play on ground that may be slightly too firm for

him, racegoers will see one of the most extravagantly improved horses these islands have ever produced. Two years ago he could not beat handicappers. Now there is hardly a horse anywhere in the world that might (and have), however, an in today's field.

Singpiel is also in Pilsudski's yard. The Japan Cup and Dubai World Cup winner has earned more money than any European

RICHARD EDMONDSON  
NAP: Helissio  
(Ascot 3.50)  
NB: Embassy  
(Ascot 3.05)

horse alive or dead and has earned, in some minds, the title of the best horse in the world. It may be, though, that he can be at his brilliant best this afternoon, and still finish third.

The last of the big guns is Helissio, who has developed the knack of winning Group One contests while expending less energy than he would in

another Royal Ascot winner is Kingfisher Mill, who won the King Edward VII Stakes, beating Palio Sky by eight lengths. Some of the lead horses of today's rivals could also do that. The chestnut is prepared by Julie Cecil, whose father, Sir Noel Mirells, won the race with Aunt Edith, Busted and Royal Palace, and the trainer's initials on his saddlecloth will give an idea of the outside influence he requires today to win. Kingfisher Mill is the only three-year-old in the race and the absence of solid representation from the Classic generation is the stately's only Achilles' heel.

Strategic Choice was two years ago and that will remain his best effort. The six-year-old's main target is the Grand Prix de Deauville and he runs here only because connections have been dutifully paying out the pennies each time a declaration stage has arrived.

In such closely matched conditions it may even be that the horses themselves are not the most significant factors. Today's weighing room will be like the United Nations and if there are Toblerone packet-shaped identifying markers on the benches they will carry the names of Ireland, Italy and the United States. The only Englishman in the race, Gary Hind, is the least successful. One of these men will probably win the race with their tactics.

The shape of the competition is such that there is no guaranteed front-runner, although Cash Asmussen did make all on Helissio in the recent Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud, his first ride on the horse. "He had a lovely run



### HOW THE BIG THREE MEASURE UP

#### HELISSIO

Age: Four  
Height: 16.1 hands  
Colour: Bay  
Breeding: By Faify King out of Helice (by Sloopy)  
Breeders: Ecurie Stymore Farm  
Owner: Enrique Sarasola  
Trainer: Chantilly  
Trainer: Eric Letourneau  
Jockey: Cash Asmussen  
Career record: 111/51111-11  
(10 starts, 8 wins, 1 place)  
Prize-money won: £1,247,407  
Strengths: Powerful galloper who is comfortable setting a pace that few rivals can live with.  
Weaknesses: May prefer softer ground. Best on only occasion he has travelled outside France.  
Rating: 128  
Odds: 6-4

#### PILSUDSKI

Age: Five  
Height: 16.1 hands  
Colour: Bay  
Breeding: By Polish Precedent out of Cooote (by Troy)  
Breeders: Ballymunk Stud  
Owner: Lord Weinstock  
Trainer: Newmarket  
Trainer: Michael Stoute  
Jockey: Michael Kinane  
Career record: 68/2013/2181121/221  
(17 starts, 7 wins, 6 places)  
Prize-money won: £1,321,428  
Strengths: Resolute horse whose best form came in his latest race.  
Weaknesses: Prefers softer ground. Well beaten on only occasion he has travelled outside France.  
Rating: 130  
Odds: 5-1

#### SINGPIEL

Age: Five  
Height: 15.3 hands  
Colour: Bay  
Breeding: By In The Wings out of Glorious Song (by Halo)  
Breeders: Sheikh Mohammed  
Owner: Sheikh Mohammed  
Trainer: Newmarket  
Trainer: Michael Stoute  
Jockey: Frankie Dettori  
Career record: 512/242221/221121-11  
(18 starts, 8 wins, 8 places)  
Prize-money won: £3,446,787  
Strengths: Has improved into a tough performer who has shown versatility in the world's top races.  
Weaknesses: Held by Pilsudski both times they have met.  
Rating: 129  
Odds: 9-4



## So tough it turns victors into victims

Greg Wood looks at a race in which triumph frequently leaves its mark

If they were boxers, an astonishing collection of belts would precede them to the ring. They are the middle-distance turf champions of three continents, lining up for a King George which promises to be the race of the season, perhaps the decade. And if there is one thing which the rich history of the King George teaches us, it is that what it promises, it generally delivers.

It is the youngest of the great British flat races, just 42 years old, but the high-summer championship has proved to be a precocious child. You do not even need to have been born when Grundy beat Rustino in 1975 to know that most of those who were would name it as the most exciting contest in living memory, and on either side of that pinnacle there are images which are less evocative.

In just its fifth running, in 1955, Ribot, rated alongside Sea Bird II as the finest racehorse since World War II, galloped home by five lengths, while the epic manner of Grundy's victory must not overshadow the names immediately before his on the roll of honour: Park Top, Nijinsky, Mill Reef and Dahlia, who remains the only dual winner of the King George.

And mention of Dahlia is a timely reminder of how important French-trained horses have been to the history of the King George. She was third behind Grundy and Rustino, in a race which was billed as a potential classic and outstripped even the pre-publicity, and when Pawnee won for Daniel Wildenstein 12 months later the prize crossed the Channel for the third time in four years.

Ever since, though, it has been the French fashion to save their best for the Ascot or October, and Iriptych, third behind Reference point 10 years ago, was the last runner from France to even the track. All of which makes the arrival of Helissio at Ascot this afternoon especially welcome.

But if the French were an im-

portant presence during the 1970s, then the somewhat unlikely location of Pulteney, in Sussex, provided some major players in the following decade. Guy Harwood sent out Kalglo to win in 1982, and then the brilliant Dancing Brave to beat Shardani and Iriptych four years later, the latter colt demonstrating in the process that Shahrasani had been fortunate indeed to beat him in the Derby at Epsom.

In 1989, meanwhile, Harwood's Cacoethes came off second-best to Nashwan after a frantic battle to the line, one which scraped the last from Nashwan's unusually deep reserves.

When Nashwan travelled to Paris for his Arc trial two months later, he had nothing more to give when Willie Carson asked him to quicken. He was beaten for the first time in his career and immediately retired, both the victor and the victim of the King George.

In that, he is far from alone. Grundy was lifeless in the Benson & Hedges Gold Cup at York three weeks after Ascot, and never raced again, while Brigadier Gerard went to the same race after his King George and suffered the first and only defeat of his 18-race career, going down by three lengths to Roberto. There are many others, among them The Minstrel, who showed astonishing courage to beat Orange Bay by a short head in 1977, for whom the King George was a glorious but final appearance before retirement.

It is not an image which many of today's racegoers will wish to dwell on – the desire to see a race which lives up to the cast list and the traditions of the King George is too strong for that. Helissio, Singpiel and Pilsudski have already achieved enough on the track to deserve a place in the history books, but if one of them earns a chapter to himself at Ascot this afternoon, let us hope that his spirit survives the experience.

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But if the French were an im-

KING GEORGE ROLL OF HONOUR					
Year	Winner	Trainer	Jockey	Time	
1956	Pentire	G Wragg	M Hills	2:28.11	
1957	Skin Suror	L Denton	M Knapp	2:31.01	
1958	King's Theatre	H Cecil	M Roberts	2:28.52	
1959	Open House	M Stoute	S Crane	2:33.94	
1960	S. J. Stoute	J Bolger	P Cole	2:30.85	
1961	Generous	A Munro	S Crane	2:28.99	
1962	Balmeze	D Cole	M Knapp	2:30.76	
1963	Wheatsheaf	D. H. Hart	W. Cawson	2:27.07	
1964	Wheatsheaf	M Roberts	S. Cawthen	2:37.33	
1965	Reference Point	H Cecil	S Cawthen	2:34.63	
1966	Dancing Brave	P Ederry	G Harwood	2:29.49	
1967	Pet Ederry	Dick Hem	W Cawson	2:27.61	
1968	Teenzoso	L Pigott	H Cawson	2:27.95	
1969	Time Charter	H Candy	J Mercer	2:30.79	
1970	Kalglo	G Harwood	G Starkey	2:31.98	

ASCOt

2.00 Peter Chapman-Hyam has by far the most wins of these trainers for his first come-out winners and used this race last year for the debut of the multiple Group-one winner Reference. His runner, SOCIAL CHARTER, should hold Matswai and Al Nasr, who carries Hamdi Al Maktoum's first colours.

HYPERION'S TV TIPS

gue that the first two named have more potential as they are undefeated after their only starts, the selection was impressive in putting their experience to effect when winning at Goodwood last time.

3.50 It is not just that HELISSIO has won all bar two of his 10 starts, it is the case with which he has won those events, mainly at Group One level, that is so impressive. Pilsudski and Singpiel, who are at ease in this fast ground, are certainly improving, but so are Prendippe and Shantou and the battle for the places should be closely fought.

3.05 The three which catch the eye are Emanuele, Miss Zeloska and FILIPPEAH, and while the battle for the places should be closely fought,

DANCE SO SUITE, who won last year with a start of 22 at Cheltenham Fox, the Al Nasr Handler, was best beaten before Major Change on his Epsom return but showed much better at Wincanton 20 days ago when fourth of nine to Sir Talbot. Paul Cole's run looks as though he would benefit from the run and roll well to finish so close over the last 100 yards. The 10-year-old is a good horse and has won twice in a row, but when last winning, and has Mack Harvine in the saddle, Major Change will be a big danger. He opened his account in the equivalent style when faced with a relatively easy task. Following last year being beaten by 22nd for Pepple Oaks on his Leicestershire debut in April, this year he has won three times in a row and has won twice in a row, and has Mack Harvine in the saddle. Major Change will be a big danger. He opened his account in the equivalent style when faced with a relatively easy task. 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# McRae stunned by record defeat

## Rugby League

DAVE HADFIELD

The St Helens coach, Shaun McRae, was in a despairing mood after his side gained the dubious distinction of being on the wrong end of the most embarrassing result yet for a British side in the World Club Championship.

Saints, European Super League's reigning champions, were thrashed 70-6 by an Auckland Warriors outfit still bottom of the league on the other side of the world.

"I don't know whether you'd call it embarrassing or insulting," he said. "It was the sort of game that makes coaches want to hand in their notice and get on with something else in life."

"We have completely undone all our good work against Cromwell on Monday. I said it was going to be tough playing so soon after that - but it wasn't 70-6 worth of tough."

The pattern of Auckland punishing St Helens' mistakes was

established in the first 30 seconds with the first of the Warriors' 12 tries. Gene Ngamu finished with three, while Saints' only bright moment was a try from Alan Huntz soon after half-time.

"We don't seem to be improving when we play against better opposition," McRae said. "Our guys had smiles on their faces when Auckland beat Bradford 64-14. We've lost by more than them, so how bad does that make us?"

The London Broncos must try to follow up their memorable victory over Canberra without the invaluable assistance of Shane Edwards when they play Brisbane tomorrow.

Edwards, whose introduction from the bench swing the game on Monday, has suffered a reaction from his troublesome hamstring. Josh White comes in at scrum-half, with Robbie Beazley moving to his regular position of hooker and Terry Matterson to loose forward.

Matt Dunford is also out with a broken hand and Steve Rosolen with a badly bruised

arm, which means that two of London's British-born players, Matt Salter and Andy Spencer, are added to the squad.

Halifax welcome back John Bentley for his first game of rugby league since returning from the British Isles tour.

Bentley, who is still under contract to Halifax despite being loaned to Newcastle and the Lions, is named on the right wing against Canberra, with David Bouveng moving to centre.

Salford have their Australian Test forward, John Cartwright, back for the first time since breaking his arm early in the season for the tour of the North Queensland Cowboys.

His international team-mate, the Cowboys' captain, Ian Roberts, expects to be fit after being forced off with a neck injury during his side's defeat at Oldham last weekend.

Wigan still have doubts over Tony Smith and Lee Hansen for Monday's game against Canterbury, but Bradford hope to have Robbie Paul back against Penrith the same day.



St Helens' Paul Newlove grapples with Auckland Warriors' Lee Oudernyn yesterday. Photograph: Empics

# Clubs dismiss plan for return to winter game

Controversial plans for a return to winter rugby for clubs outside the Super League have been dropped.

The First and Second Division Clubs' Association met at Dewsbury yesterday to discuss a merger with the amateur game, a move seen as paving the way for an end to summer rugby for just two seasons.

The clubs agreed to proceed with unification talks with the British Amateur Rugby League Association (Barla), but made it clear there would be no return to summer rugby.

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A Rugby Football League spokesman said: "There is a possible opportunity to make real progress with the amateur game through constructive dialogue. It has been unanimously agreed that the RFL board of directors should decide the composition of a joint negotiating committee with a view to taking the matter forward so that negotiations can commence."

"There was also an overwhelming desire by the clubs present at the meeting that they should stay with summer rugby and that there is no

longer an option of returning to playing in the winter."

A row had broken out after initial private discussions between Barla officials and Bob Scott, the general manager of the First and Second Division Clubs' Association.

Malcolm White, chairman of Swinton, had warned that some clubs were so angry over what he called undercover talks that they were considering pulling out of the association.

Mike Morrissey, the Barla chairman, has welcomed the possibility of unification saying: "A window of opportunity has opened for the game of rugby league and egos should not stand in the way of progress."

The newly formed Scottish

Rugby League swings into action tomorrow when Linlithgow meet Lomond Valley Raiders and Inverness take on Whitecraigs of Glasgow.

Grangemouth, who have a

strong record, are the fifth

members of the League, whose

other three clubs, Scottish

Students, West of Scotland and

Cardonald, are not thought

strong enough yet to compete

in regular fixtures.

The launch of SRL 97, which ends on 24 August, follows the recent international between Scotland and France at the Firhill stadium in Glasgow.

Salford's move for Oldham's unsettled forward David Bradbury looks certain to go to an independent tribunal. The Reds have offered £50,000 for the Great Britain player, who is on the transfer list at £200,000.

Sheffield Eagles beat Northern Territory 28-6 in a friendly in Darwen yesterday, with tries coming from Darren Turner (2), Willie Morganson, Matt Crowther, Johnny Lawless and Lynton Stott. Mark Aston and David Mycock each kicked one goal.

Castford's Super League meeting with the London Broncos at Wheldon Road has been brought forward from Sunday 10 August to Friday 8 August at 7.30pm - because it is being shown live on Sky Sports.

If London fail to beat Castford, Bradford Bulls could clinch the title by beating their only other rivals, Leeds, at Odsal two days later in a match that will also be screened live, with a 6.35 start.

# Shuhrah tops 1,000 Guineas market

The Godolphin filly Shuhrah

upset the well-touted Ashrakat to make a winning debut at Ascot yesterday. She was promoted to 16-1 favourite for next year's 1,000 Guineas by William Hill after securing a length and a half victory over the 4-6 favourite, Frankie Dettori

dropped from the outside and, while Ashrakat fought for the room

to challenge, the filly kept up the gallop to win going away.

"We heard that the runner-up was a slightly good filly and slightly lost confidence about our chance," said racing manager, Simon Crisford. "She's been working for quite some time and a couple of niggling problems have kept her off the track till now. She has an engine and bags of potential."

John Dunlop was disappo-

inted with the performance of Ashrakat, like the winner a

daughter of Danzig. "I was very disappointed. She seemed to get a bit tired and didn't pick up or lengthen," he said.

Coral make Shuhrah their

16-1 joint-favourite with Cape

Verdi. Ashrakat is 20-1.

## RACING RESULTS

### ASCOT

2.30E: 1. HALIFAX (H) (0) Ryan 10-1-2

2. 2. STYLIC (H) (0) D. D. D. 10-1-2

3. 2. R. (H) (0) Newmarket. Total: £5,30

22.50, £1.20. DF: £3.10. CSF: £14.75. NR

Essendon. Friendly Warning.

2.35E: 1. PERCY (H) (0) Tolley 9-3

2. 2.51222 ALWAYS LUCKY (H) (0) J. R. 8-2

3. 2. CAPOTAY (H) (0) W. M. T. 8-2

4. 2. 2.51223 CLOUTIER (H) (0) J. 8-2

5. 2. JUST A STROLL (H) (0) M. 8-2

6. 2. 2.51224 VOGUE IMPERIAL (H) (0) S. J. 8-2

7. 2. 2.51225 PERSIAN FORTUNE (H) (0) W. M. T. 8-2

8. 2. 2.51226 TALASSEUM (H) (0) C. 8-2

9. 2. 2.51227 NUNNY DAYER (H) (0) 8-2

10. 2. 2.51228 PEGASUS (H) (0) J. 8-2

11. 2. 2.51229 RUMBLE RUMBLE (H) (0) 8-2

12. 2. 2.51230 RUMBLE RUMBLE (H) (0) 8-2

13. 2. 2.51231 RUMBLE RUMBLE (H) (0) 8-2

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58. 2. 2.51276 RUMBLE RUMBLE (H) (0) 8-2

59. 2. 2.51277 RUMBLE RUMBLE (H) (

James Parrack represented Britain as a swimmer for eight years, appearing at one Olympics and winning a Commonwealth silver medal. But one of his greatest experiences was helping Eva Mortensen to swim the Channel

# Assault on swimming's Everest

**W**hen Eva stepped out of the cold water she was bright red and perfectly calm. This was not at all what I had expected. She slowly dressed herself on the banks of the deserted Yorkshire reservoir and we made our way to the car. She said she felt "OK", but she still had not started shivering. Right then I knew we were in very serious trouble. I calculated that the nearest hospital was half an hour away.

"I feel strange," she said. "My head hurts." She had lost all colour from her face. Immediately, I stopped the car and dragged her out. "Start walking," I said urgently. "Quickly, we have to walk."

We had been told that if the warning signs are ignored, hypothermia can be fatal. Fortunately, within two or three minutes, Eva's body was shaking uncontrollably and then she started bitching like hell about the cold. "Thank God" I thought, as this was the first indication that she would return to normal and that the crisis was over, but it would take her 10 days to overcome her fear and return to the cold water.

A week earlier, in May 1996, I had accompanied Eva Mortensen, my Danish girlfriend and fellow Olympic swimmer, to Dover, to begin her four-month preparation to swim the Channel. Known around the world as the ultimate open water challenge, Eva had been fascinated with it since the age of seven. A Danish citizen who grew up in the United States, Eva and I had been living and training in Leeds as full-time swimmers for the last two years. Neither of us was selected for the Atlanta Games and in April last year, aged 26, she decided to train for the Channel. The most fascinating chapter of my swimming life was about to begin.

For someone who had averaged 60 kilometres (37 miles) a week as an international swimmer for the last 10 years, the 21 miles was not going to be the problem. For a slim competitive athlete with fit body fat, the real problem during a swim likely to last more than 10 hours was going to be the cold. "The best insulation is a layer of fat. Another good insulator is the mind, but you have to be incredibly strong," Alison Streeter told us in Dover. Alison has made the swim a staggering 35 times and is in Dover every weekend from May helping hopeful Channel swimmers acclimate. But, living in Leeds, was just not possible to join them regularly. On the exposed moorland north of Bradford, we found a windsurfing reservoir, and this is where Eva trained.

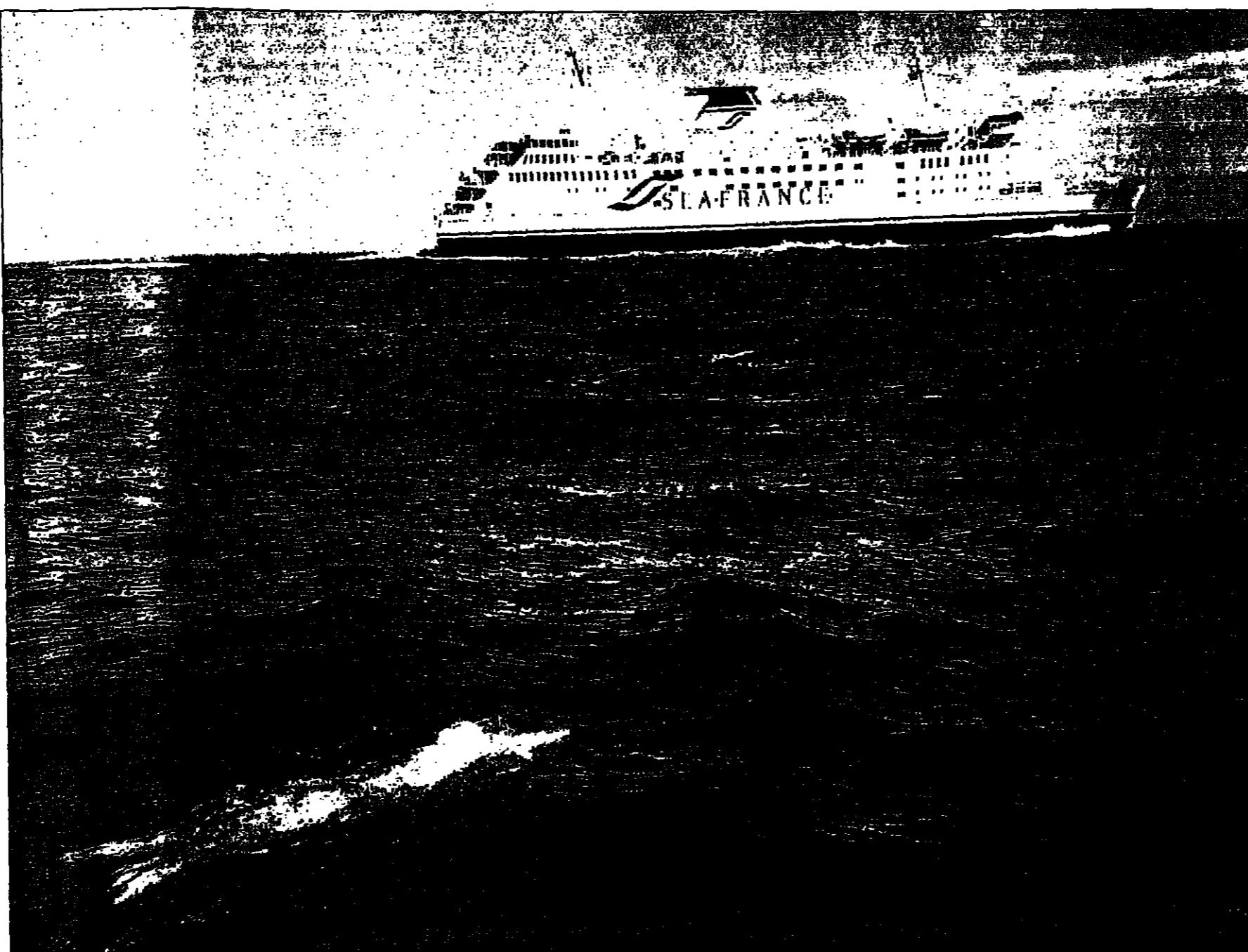
After her initial shock, the painful cold trips lasted just six or seven minutes. It was odd that she could only stay in for such a short time when her first dip at Dover lasted 14 minutes. By mid-June, she could still only manage 15 minutes: it was a demoralising month.

With no sign of progress, going to the reservoir became harder and harder. It was distressing, too, when a paltry half hour would wipe her out for most of the evening. Half an hour is so effortless in a pool that clearly here was a completely new swimming experience for both of us.

As the time to go came round, I found myself in a difficult situation. She would try to talk me out of taking her and it was tempting not to. It was hard for me to see her keep getting beaten by the elements and to keep picking herself up to go back for more. She needed someone to help her through, but I could not tell her to do something we both knew I was not prepared to do myself. It was a constant struggle for which the years of dedicated competitive swimming career had prepared her well.

At the end of June she entered the National 25km race at Ulswater and lasted just over an hour in the 57-degree water. It was depressing to think that our hour in June had to become, possibly, 12 hours by August. That kind of suffering didn't bear thinking about.

In early July, we returned to Dover and made a crucial discovery: we realised that the reservoirs up north had been colder than the sea.



Danish swimmer Eva Mortensen, speed 1.2-1.7 knots, is overtaken by a ferry on her journey from Dover

Photographs: James Parrack

which explained why she could only manage the shorter sessions. With the sea at 59 degrees, Eva swam for four and a half hours in the filthy water of Dover harbour. She emerged with her face blackened from garbage spewed out by the ferries, bored and miserably cold, but began to believe there was any chance. Others had come from across the world and were never given the chance. The furthest we had travelled that week was from the other side of Kent.

Then, miraculously, at 7 o'clock on Monday 26 August, 38 hours before her flight home, Mike said: "If she wants to go, we can go tomorrow!"

Panic! We packed. We measured out the food and drink. We carefully checked we had everything, went to bed and then got up to check it all over again. Of course she was nervous, but I had confidence in her. Having made six hours, I knew she could make eight or 10. We arrived in Dover at 9am and met Mike at his 30ft cabin cruiser, the Sea Satin. We were accompanied by his wife, Angela, the official Channel observer, and their son, Lance.

we phoned Mike to see if there was any chance. Others had come from across the world and were never given the chance. The furthest we had travelled that week was from the other side of Kent.

Up on the deck, the boat is now filthy. The only hope of cleaning grease off someone is with neat washing-up liquid, which has leaked out of my bag and all over the floor. There is lanolin grease everywhere and poor Lance spends the first half hour of the swim wiping it all off. I watch helplessly, too ill to move. It crosses my mind that I've got another 14 hours of this.

The sun is shining in a clear blue sky and, slowly, I start to calm down.

Feeding in the Channel is very important. Food science has come a long way from the steak and chips of old, and modern carbohydrates

frightening trip. Mike is pretty sure hers is going to be a "really bad patch". I give her some water and it comes straight up again.

She could be sick because the Maxim drink is too concentrated and is being rejected; she is swallowing seawater; or she has taken the same seasickness pills I did and they aren't working. Mike advises me to lay off the Maxim and at the three-hour feed she has a coffee. And carries on being sick. In 1994 she competed in a 10-hour race in Canada where she was sick for an hour and a half. My concern here is the cold. The water temperature in Canada was 72 degrees and today it is 61.

She manages to hold down a very weak blackcurrant juice sweetened with a teaspoon of fructose. At four hours she takes some aspirin for a headache and at four hours and five

swim with her. The rules of Channel swimming say you can swim with someone for up to an hour, then you cannot go back in again for at least another hour, repeating this pattern as often as you like. Watching from the boat, it is easy to get lulled into a false sense of security.

The sun is shining, she looks comfortable and my mind wanders. I watch one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world as we pass through, and over the CB, listen to the conversations the captains have with the coastguard. My imagination drifts to the crew and the cargo and their destination ports all over the world. I think how more people have been in space than swim the Channel; how more have sat on top of Everest. One in three Channel swimmers end in failure and there are two others attempting to become the 501st person to swim across. One of them is less than half a mile away from us and his name is Igor. I speculate idly about his life and where he's from with a name like Igor. He's Brazilian as it turns out.

Then I leap into the Channel and feel first hand the biting cold which takes my breath away and the panic of not being able to breathe. I can barely see a yard in front of me, the roar of the water is constantly in my ears and a mouthful of seawater makes me retch. The seaweed scares me with the threat of jellyfish, and quickly I begin to experience some of the feelings of total isolation in the dark world of Channel swimming. I wonder in disbelief how the hell she has been managing to deal with this for five hours

The pilot sets your start time according to how long the swim is expected to take. The tide takes you in an 'S' shape and for a 10-hour swim (our expectation) our start time was set for 10.30am. All being well, the tides would wash Eva on to one of the long beaches that sweep north from Cap Griz Nez. The pilot's navigation of the tides is crucial. It is not unknown to come within a quarter of a mile of land and have to stop because the tide just will not let you in.

The 20-minute boat trip to the starting point is intense. It seems awfully rough to me. The official log describes the sea as "its usual lollipy swell." "Flat," Mike calls it and after only 15 minutes I'm feeling queasy.

I try to help Eva grease up, which is necessary to protect against chafing from the swimsuit and the cold. But the rocking of the boat as it hits another swell is constantly throwing us off balance. She's stressing out and I'm doing a hopeless job of putting

can be taken in a simple, drinkable form. When the Sea Satin blares her siren, we'll approach for the first of many feeds.

The half-hour feeds are taking

around 20 seconds and after an hour she settles into a comfortable 1.7 knots (1.95mph) at 72 strokes per minute. The first ferry passes us 400 metres to port. It is a frightening sight, but after several hours I get used to how they come and start to enjoy the company. Eva is obviously not used to this.

At only two and a half hours we hit problems. Eva starts throwing up, which is very bad sign. She needs the drinks to stay inside, to fuel the muscles and, more importantly, to have any chance of fighting the cold.

Without the fuel she is going to have a really hard time at around six hours - the "bad patch" - when your body starts accessing its fat stores and weird things start happening mentally and physically. For those in this position for the first time, it can be a

minutes I watch helplessly as she empties it into the Channel again. "I can't keep anything down," she says, obviously in distress. Eva has dropped to 1.4 knots and Mike says we could be looking at a 12 to 14 hour swim. I want to do anything to spare her the enormous feeling of grief that failure will bring.

The white cliffs of Dover are still

looking awfully large. They say you should never look backwards because the white cliffs are so big you don't even feel like you're getting anywhere. You can see them all the way across.

The white cliffs of Dover are still looking awfully large. They say you should never look backwards because the white cliffs are so big you don't even feel like you're getting anywhere. You can see them all the way across.

The next two feeds are encouraging. She holds down a cup of warm blackcurrant and I add a teaspoon of fructose to the next. She has recovered a steady rhythm and after five hours she passes an orange buoy marking the mid-point of the channel. I'm preparing to go in and

As she approaches six hours she starts to say she is feeling tired, then complains of being cold. Her bad patch has started. Either the cold will slow her right down and she will eventually need to be dragged out, or she'll come out the other side and be OK. Everything is hurting her and she has dropped to 1.2 knots. She keeps asking how far she has left and I wonder what to do. What am I going to tell her? I tell her to count nine

feet. "And then I'll be there?"

Think of something, Jim. She won't even be close.

"And then you'll be close," I say. Mike does not think this is a good plan. He wants to know what I'll say in nine feeds' time. Well I figure I'll drive off that bridge when I get to it. Maybe she'll lose count. I look ahead, but France is still looking awfully small.

Never tell them whereabouts they are, or how far they have got tell. It's the general rule. Be encouraging and be vague. Tell them to pick it up and they will be there quicker. Simple logic like this always baffles a delirious Channel swimmer.

At seven and a half hours she has been holing down the blackcurrant and fructose and I begin to add very small amounts of Maxim. Her teeth are chattering and she wants more aspirin. She is getting annoyed that I am not answering her questions of how far to go with direct answers. This is a good sign. If she is complaining she is OK. It's when they go quiet that the pilot will start to watch very closely for signs of hypothermia.

**S**he looks awful. Then, out of the blue, she asks in a quiet, miserable voice, "Will I do it in under 10 hours?" and my world stops. Her pain is breaking my heart but I'm helpless. Like a protective mother to her child, I want to scoop her out, hold her tight and shelter her from all this suffering. But it is a pivotal moment in the swim. She has set her mind on the next few hours and has resolved one way or another to deal with it. Her pace is slightly up and Mike is amazed. He wants me to be even more encouraging. She could finish in under 11 hours if she can keep this up.

I jump in again and after a pitiful 15 minutes my shivering can once more be felt all over the boat. What a wimp.

But something has happened to her. Over the next hour she stops complaining and her stroke-rate and speed both increase. She is back on to weak Maxim and is taking all the drinks without any difficulty. At eight and a half hours the eaty in the observers' log reads, "Silent and determined now."

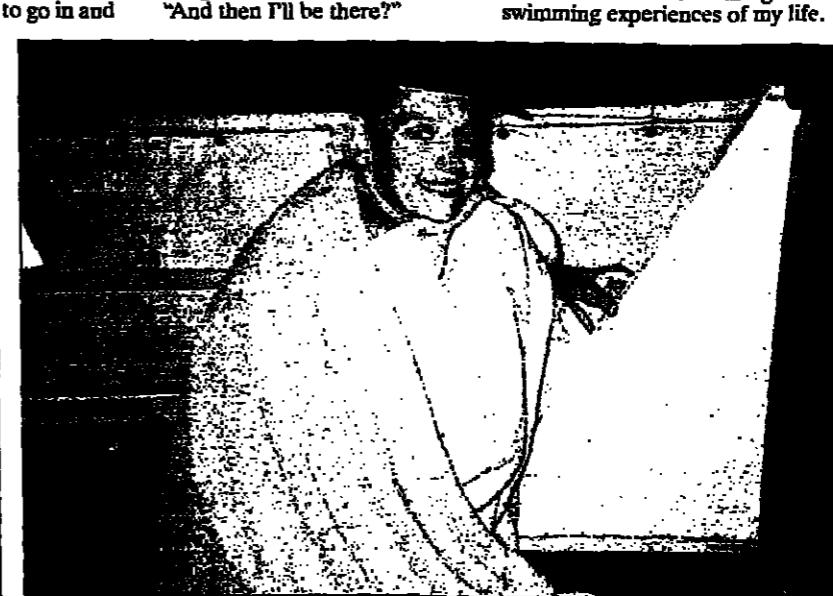
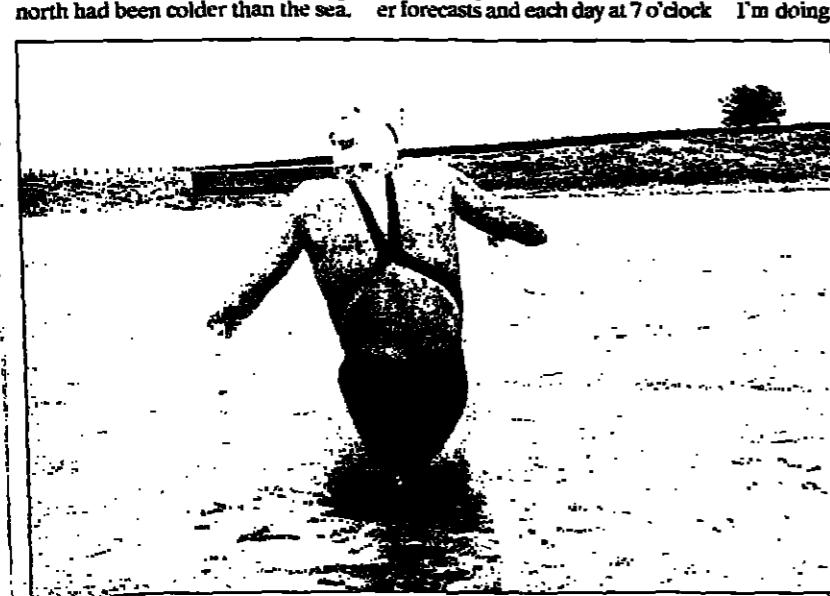
France is looking so large now and yet the last two to three hours are interminable. Nine hours, nine and a half hours. She is inching towards her goal, desperate to get there but apparently making no progress. "Am I there yet?" she asks exasperated.

"In 20 minutes you'll be 1,000 yards from France!" I yell. But it takes an hour to get 1,000 yards from France and by this time the sunshine is long gone and it's pitch black. If she passes out now, the tide would wash her up on the beach but I can't help feeling that to be washed unconscious onto a French beach would not really be the ideal way to finish.

Unfortunately, she can't see anything in the darkness. As it is now too shallow for the boat, I'm in again to lead her to the beach, but she can't see me either. They are shouting directions at us but we're floundering. It's maddening to be so close and to feel like neither of us is getting anywhere. We don't know just how close we are. And then all of a sudden Eva realises we're swimming in three feet of water and can stand up. She runs up on to the beach, throws her arms in the air and screams.

It's 9.11pm. Ten hours and 46 minutes after starting, and 43,000 strokes later, she's made it. She's conquered the English Channel.

It is a three-hour ride back to England. She talked like a waterfall, 11 hours of pent-up thoughts tumbling out of her. We sat on the top deck of the boat in the cold and the wind with blankets around us. In the two and a half years I'd known her I had never seen her looking so radiantly happy and so at peace. She was exhausted, cold, dirty and her body was in so much pain; but she was loving it. I left her to her thoughts and reflections on her achievement and her immense pride. Even though I felt as though I had nothing to do with it, it was without doubt one of the greatest swimming experiences of my life.



Cold-water training at the Wechia reservoir, West Yorkshire, a demoralising period; waiting for weather news before finally making the attempt on 27 August 1996; wrapped up warm, making the return trip to England on board Sea Satin





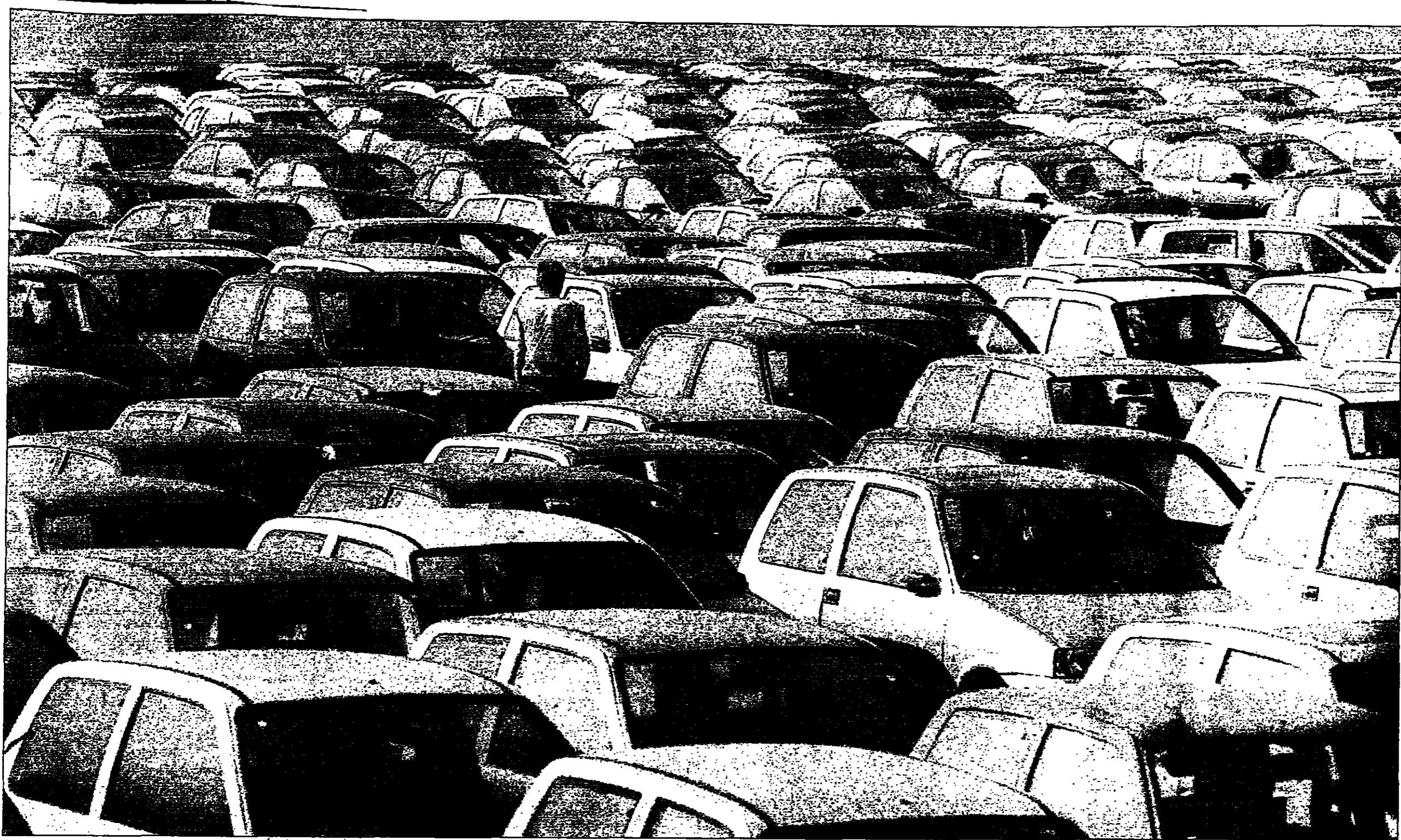
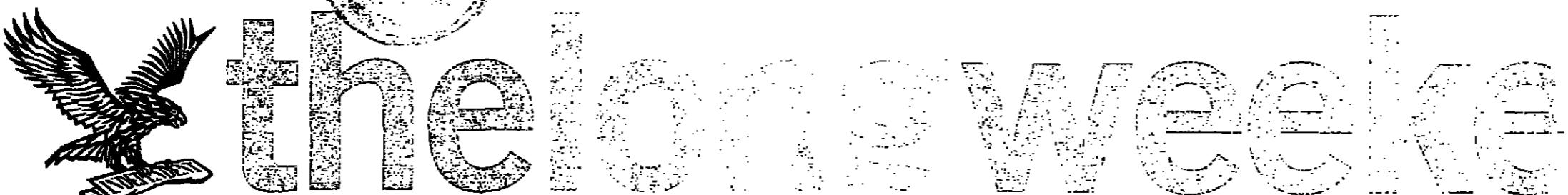


IMAGE OF More than 60,000 new cars stand in neat rows at Royal Portbury Dock, Avonmouth, near Bristol. The cars have been imported to capitalise on the annual 1 August rush for new registration number plates.  
THE WEEK Photograph by Tom Pilston, taken with a Nikon FM2 with a 300mm lens at 1/125th of a second, f16, using Kodak 160 ASA film.

To order a print of this picture - price £15 - phone 0171-293 2534



THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 26 JULY 1997

## WORDS OF THE WEEK

**N**ot all miracles stand up to scientific scrutiny, but breast milk is one that does. It is without doubt one of the world's great life-savers. Science has taken a long time to recognise what mothers and midwives always knew: breast-feeding is best for babies, and there is no substitute of equal value. Breast milk contains all the nutrients vital for nourishment, as well as growth factors believed to help in tissue development and antibodies to fend off infections. It is always at the right temperature, requires no mixing, sterilisation or equipment, and is safe regardless of the quality and availability of water. Its composition changes from feeding to feeding, and even within feedings, and the amount is triggered by the mother's hormonal response to the needs of the baby. Breast-feeding encourages bonding between mother and baby, and discourages conception.

The World Health Organisation and Unicef recommend that babies be fed breast milk only - nothing else, not even water - for about the first six months of life. Worldwide, reduction of formula feeding and improved breast-feeding practices could save an estimated 1.5 million children a year.

So why are only about 44 per cent of infants in the developing world (even fewer in industrialised countries) exclusively breast-fed? One factor has to be the relentless promotion of breast milk substitutes. It is no accident that breast-feeding levels are high in countries such as Burundi and Rwanda, where there is little marketing. I am

## Why babies must come before business

In its annual report 'The Progress of Nations' Unicef ranks countries according to their progress on human rights, health and welfare. The Right Reverend Barrington Ward unleashed an attack on the sale of formula milk for the feeding of babies

now firmly persuaded that the promotion regularly practised by the infant formula companies is unethical and flouts the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, which they signed. In fact, they helped draft the code, which seeks to protect breast-feeding as "an unequalled way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants". (A report on the code breakers was made between August and October 1996 in Bangladesh, Poland, South Africa and Thailand.)

The results showed that the formula companies have been distributing marketing literature promoting formula over breast milk, and giving away formula to maternity hospitals and mothers - from one in 12 mothers surveyed in Poland, to one in four in Thailand.

Free samples, especially those handed out by health professionals, are an insidious form of promotion. A mother can easily switch from breast to bottle, but from bottle to breast is another story. After being fed with formula, even for just a few days, the baby, used to an artificial teat, is fussy about accepting the breast. Meanwhile, the mother's milk production has declined.

Now the worried mother has a cranky and hungry baby on her hands, and she is convinced she must give up the breast and use formula for the duration. Rarely are such problems explained to women when "gifts" of baby formula are thrust into their hands. And when a doctor or nurse provides the "gift", it carries an implicit stamp of approval.

The industry has complained that the study is biased and unscientific. This is

rubbish. Independent co-ordinators supervised the study in each country, and the many organisations that sponsored it would not have gone through this exercise without assurances that rigorous research protocols would be observed.

The Church of England suspended its support of a boycott of companies promoting formula, as an act of good faith while the study was being undertaken. The multinationals' criticism of the study adds up to this: they are simply not about to acknowledge their own unethical practices in countries that offer promising market potential.

THE MOVE towards infant formula became epidemic in the industrialised countries after the Second World War and is spreading in rapidly urbanising

parts of the developing world. Despite their claims, though, industry has never developed a product on a par with breast milk. In fact, the best that science has done in this area is to prove that women's bodies know better than any manufacturer what to feed their babies.

Of course, the impact of inappropriate infant feeding is immeasurably greater in developing countries. Lack of safe water for mixing the formula, and contamination of feeding-bottles, are the main reasons why formula-fed babies die; another is that families cannot afford adequate supplies of formula, so they dilute it too much.

Compared with babies who are exclusively breast-fed, those fed formula have 10 times the risk of incurring bacterial infections requiring hospitalisation, four times the risk of meningitis and three to four times the risk of middle ear infections and gastroenteritis.

NOT SURPRISINGLY, the industry has challenged in national courts some of the new laws that have been enacted to prevent such abuses. Their arguments can verge on the ludicrous: in India, Nestlé argued that it could not meet the law's requirement that a notice about the superiority of breast-milk appear in a panel at the centre of formula tins - because you cannot pinpoint the centre on a cylindrical tin!

John Walsh meets Cleo Laine page 3

The trouble with space girls page 7



### Travel & outdoors

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# One for his nob, two for his heels

William Hartston explores the curious rules and history of one of our oldest and most popular card games

**A**mong card games, cribbage has for years been looked down upon as a ragged Cinderella compared with its more affluent sisters, bridge and poker. Yet its mathematical complexities and psychological overtones provide an excitement that devotees insist matches anything offered by those games. The game of six-card cribbage (the most common version), in case you need reminding, works like this:

## The rules

Cribbage is a game for two players, using a standard 52-card pack. Kings rank high, aces low. Points are scored for various card combinations either in hand, or occurring during play. Each player's score is registered by a peg moving along a track of holes on a wooden board. The first player to score 61 points wins the game. (You can, of course, use pencil and paper, but for the true enthusiast the cribbage board is an essential feature of the game.)

Cut for deal: the player drawing the lower card is the dealer, the other is given three points for "last" as compensation. (Cribbage is full of such charming twitches of vocabulary.) Six cards are dealt to each player, the remainder placed face down on the table.

Each player must then choose two cards to discard. These are left face down to form the "crib", which is not revealed until the end of the hand. The undealt cards are then cut, and the new top card turned up as the "start" card. If it's a jack, the dealer scores two points, "two for his heels".

Beginning with the non-dealer, the players then take turns to reveal one card from their hands. The pip values of these (court cards count 10, ace is one) are added to the start card, the running total is announced at each play, and the total pip value may not exceed 31. If it reaches exactly 31, the player whose card was just played scores two points. If you have no card that can be played without exceeding 31, you say "Go" and your opponent plays again if he can. If 31 is reached, or both players say "Go", you start counting again from zero with the remaining cards.

Other ways of scoring during play:

15: If you play a card that brings the total to 15 you score two points, "fifteen two".

Pair: If you play a card of the same value as the previous card, you score two for a pair. (King and king are, of course, a pair, but king and jack, for example, are not.)

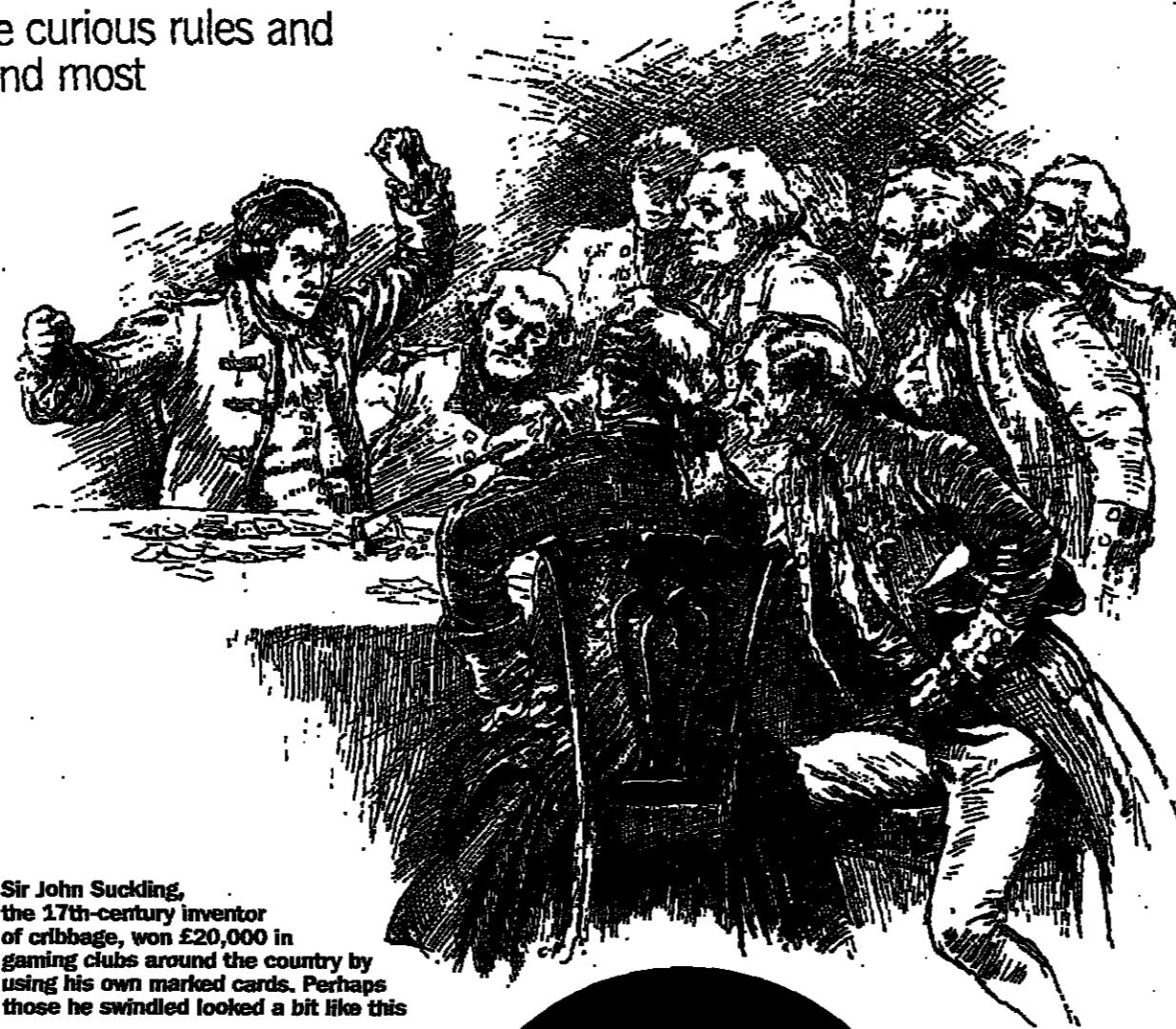
Pair royal: If you follow a pair immediately with a third card of the same value, you score six for "pair royal".

Double pair royal: And four in a row scores 12.

Run: A run of three or more cards of consecutive values (10-jack-queen, or A-2-3-4, for example, but not K-Q-A) scores as many points as cards in the run. Note that the cards do not have to occur in the right order: 7-3-4-6-5 is a perfectly valid five-card run.

Last card: If the total of 31 is not reached exactly, one point is scored by whoever played last.

When play is completed, each player scores



**Sir John Suckling,**  
the 17th-century inventor  
of cribbage, won £20,000 in  
gambling clubs around the country by  
using his own marked cards. Perhaps  
those he swindled looked a bit like this

his own hand, adding the value of the start card to the four he kept, as follows:

15: any combination of cards adding up to 15 scores two points. (So, for example, J,Q,5,5 would score 14 – each of the fives can pair with jack or queen, and the three fives provide another two points. You would say: "fifteen two, fifteen four, fifteen six ... up to fifteen fourteen, adding two for each scoring combination.")

Pair: As during play, a pair counts two, with six points for a "pair royal" (three of the same value) and 12 for all four.

Run: Runs of three or more cards score as many points as cards in the run.

Flush: Four points if all your cards are the same suit (with a bonus point if the start card is of the same suit)

One for his nob: One point for holding the jack of the same suit as the start card.

When both players have scored their hands, the dealer exposes the crib and adds its score to his own.

## The origins of cribbage

According to John Aubrey, the game was invented by Sir John Suckling (1609-42), a poet, gambler and Royalist. "He sent his Cards to all



Gaming places  
in the country

## Cribbage – Harry Poyner contributes the world's first broadsheet cribbage column

It wasn't to be my day. With the box against me, I picked up A.A.3.7.8.3. Not the sort of hand you go into raptures about, but no real problem to discard from, I thought, as I selected A.3, preferring to keep six holes rather than to throw out 3,7 and reduce my score to that of Morgan's orchard (which always has two pips in it). My opponent was rather quicker than usual in selecting her own discards, and she

seemed quite pleased when I cut an ace for the top of the pack. I should have known this was a bad sign – though it was too late for me to do anything about it.

The play was quite unexceptional. I led one of my 8s – if it was paired I had another 8 all ready for six points; but no, she played a queen (not having an 8 to fall into the trap). It was useless now, so I played my second 8, making

the score 26, to see a 5 played for 31 for 2 with the traditional "five's a fix" verbal flourish.

The second round of play gave my opponent just one point for "last".

From my hand, A.7.8.8, thanks to the ace which turned up, I netted eight holes. Across the table, too, came eight holes from the same ace and 4,10,Q.

Then it appeared that her discards had been 2,2. This turned the box into a brilliant box.

Very useful A.A.2.2.3 (16 from four runs of three and two pairs) shooting her 19 points ahead on the deal. Ouch! The discards from two modest hands had formed themselves into a brilliant box.

Just suppose, I thought, I had kept the two pairs: A.A.8.8, throwing out 3,7. With the same turn-up, this would have given me a score of eight, though rather differently, but the box would

have been reduced to A.2.3.3,7, yielding 10 points – six fewer than it in fact was; still most unwelcome, but a slight improvement all the same.

Would you like to see more cribbage in the paper? Harry Poyner tells us that it is "perhaps the only card game worth playing for love". The games page will be interested to hear readers' views on this, and other neglected games.

## Games people play

Pandora Melly learns about the beauty of Staffordshire dogs and dustbins

Polly Devlin, 52, writer

My game is collecting, and I'm powerless to resist it. When you start, it's not just "Oh, I'll have that extra little Staffordshire dog to add to my collection", because you forget that you have any other dogs; it's the only dog in the world you've ever wanted. Then comes the moment when you get the object and a kind of unshakable peace descends for a while; then you need to do it again. You never reach saturation point.

If you talk to an alcoholic, they'll tell you their addiction is an adjunct to their life, which isn't true: it's the biggest component: where the next drink is coming from. For a long time, collecting had that sort of importance in my life: a pathological torturing for my friends and family.

The sort of collecting I do is finding things by using your eye, rather than as some people collect old clothes. They'll produce the Dolce & Gabbana and say: "Look what I have!" There's a wonderful book called *The Unruly Passion* by a New York psychiatrist who observes collectors and talks to them. What they're really saying is: "Look how clever I am; I found this; nobody else noticed this, and it's mine!" so in that sense it's a game, because one wins appreciation like a small child.

I've stopped playing that particular game. If I see something absolutely lovely, I'll go in and look at it, and perhaps I will acquire it, but I'm no longer irked by the need.

I move through a wrack of possessions. The thing that I can't believe is when somebody comes into my playing-pitch; somebody who hasn't an eye and doesn't understand. They'll look around your room, which is exquisite in its beauty, and they'll ask: "Who does your dustbins?"

*Staffordshire dogs* are available at any good antique shop. Enquiries relating to dustbins should be referred to your local council.

## 103 update

Some months ago, we revealed on this page that the answer to Life, the Universe and Everything was not, as had been thought, 42, but was, in fact, 103. The evidence was irrefutable. Not only did the alphabetical values of the letters in the word "bulshit" add up to 103, but the 103 bus travelled between two destinations (Rainham War Memorial and Bromley) whose letter-sums also differed by 103.

Since no reader wrote to disagree, we have not returned to the topic, but some new evidence has just been sent to us which we feel absolutely clinches the matter. We have just received the summer issue of *Summing Scene*, a lively publication from Oxfordshire. On its second page, we read the following disturbing news:

"Thames Transit has withdrawn the 103 service between Oxford and Abingdon via Boars Hill due to lack of passengers."

They should, of course, have stopped, with the rest of us, at 103.

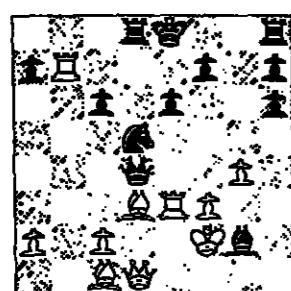
## British champion needed

It is not often that we get asked to find a British champion, but the game of *Rummikub* is in need of one and we are pleased to do anything we can to help.

*Rummikub*, though the makers, Goliath Games, would probably be loath to admit it, is a version of the card game of rummy, but played with numbered tiles instead of playing cards. Perhaps because of the tactile joy of tiles, *Rummikub* is now played in some 40 countries and will hold its world championship at Marlow-on-Thames in October. But they do not have a British champion. To fill the gap, a contest will be held as part of the Mind Sports Olympiad in London from 18 to 21 August. So if you want to be a British champion, get in touch with Goliath Games on 0181-450 3104 and they will send you details of the game and the event.

The games page is edited by William Hartston

## Chess William Hartston

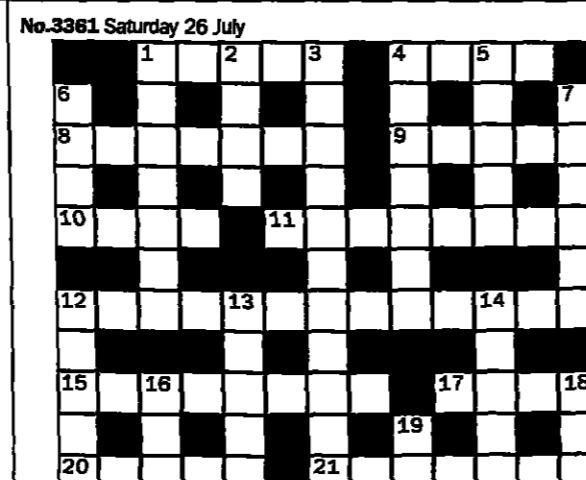


Viswanathan Anand started the tournament in Biel, Switzerland in fine style with a splendid win over Joel Lautier. In a curious line of the Centre Counter Defence, Lautier took up the challenge of Anand's 12.Rh3 (12.E3 is the normal move) by chasing the rook into the centre of the board, then pursuing it with Nf6 and Nd5.

The price of this, however, was having his bishop incarcerated on g2. At first sight, it looked as though White would win two pieces for his rook, but Lautier's idea of Bf4, then eating his way with the queen via c3 to d4, left the situation less clear. White's rook on e3 could not escape, and White could not capture the bishop on g2 without abandoning his defence to the rook.

After 23...Rd8, Black probably expected Anand to go after the bishop with 24.Qg1, but he came up with something far more powerful. His 24.h6! set up a fine combination after 24...gxh6 (see diagram) when he played 25.Bg6!!

## Concise crossword Alan Hiron



**ACROSS**

- Follow (5)
- Domicile (4)
- N African country (7)
- Spanish wine (5)
- Accept (4)
- Garmets (8)
- Gas present in atmosphere (6,7)
- Unease (8)
- Lovers' quarrel (4)
- Eagle's nest (5)
- Obstacle (7)
- Notice (4)
- Praise (5)
- Follow (5)
- Rh1 Qxd4
- Bc1 B5
- Ne5 e6
- g4 Bg6
- h4 Nbd7
- Rd3 Rd8
- Rh3 Bg2
- Rd3 resigns

**Solutions to yesterday's Concise Crossword:**  
ACROSS: 1. Nettler, 5. Lies (Naturalise), 9. Niece, 10. Tankards, 11. Turntables, 14. Communication, 16. Highlander, 20. Texture, 21. Ocean, 22. Gads, 23. Stradie. DOWN: 1. Nonstick, 2. Thoreau, 3. Ewart, 4. Establishment, 6. Imam, 7. Side, 8. Angels, 12. Birdseed, 13. Entrance, 15. Unique, 17. Aloha, 18. Star, 19. Aza.

## Bridge Alan Hiron

Game all; dealer South	
North	♦A Q 10 8
	♦10 9 8 7
	♦K 6 4 2
	♦Q
West	♦K J 6 2
	♦7 5 4 3
	♦6
	♦Q 10 9 8
	♦J
	♦J 10 9 6
South	♦K 8 7 5 4 3 2
	♦9
	♦A K Q J 5 4 2
	♦A 7 5 3
	♦A

This deal represents a two-part problem. First, why was South pleased with his extremely accurate play in 6? And second, why did his delight turn to quiet rage at comparison time on this deal from match-play?

A long and scientific auction led one South to 6. Believe it or not, he had been able to ascertain that his partner held

♦K, so he was able to judge that Six was high enough. Well done, and the play was neat, too. Declared won the opening club lead, drew trumps, and cashed the two top diamonds. If both opponents had followed suit, there would have been no difficulty in simply conceding a diamond; if West proved short in diamonds, then a ruffing finesse in spades, repeated if necessary, would have ensured 12 tricks; and as the diamonds lay, a simple spade finesse would have end-played East even if he had been able to win.

Very neat, and South was quietly pleased with his good technique. But why was he in for a disappointment? At the other table, with no pretensions to science, North-South had blotted their way to 7. Hoping for the best in a dubious contract, South had won the club lead and ruffed off seven rounds of trumps. Poor West was squeezed flat in diamonds and spades and the grand slam rolled in.

## Perplexity

"You're an odd chap, Watson," said Sherlock Holmes. "A couple of weeks ago you claimed to be twice the man I am. HOLMES plus HOLMES equals WATSON, you said, and that LAWES was your pin number. Well, from that information, I can't tell whether your pin is 5729 or 7348."

"I try one, then the other," said Watson. "They give you three goes."

"Well I think I've got your number," said Holmes, "and it shows I'm twice the man you

are." It's WATSON plus

WATSON equals HOLMES that you should be working out."

"Surely there's more than one answer to that, too," said Watson.

"But as I said," added Holmes, "you're an odd chap, Watson."

Can you help work out the value of WATSON? Answers, by 7 August, to: Perplexity, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

This week's Chambers Dictionary winner: Paul Terry (Wokingham).

In the early days, the only difference between match and money play was that people were much tighter and it was quite rare to see a 4 cube. Gradually players realized that the score had a significant influencing factor on cube decisions. Ideas such as not doubling so readily when ahead in a match became standard. Soon, some of the keenest minds decided to work out match equity tables.

A match equity table gives you the percentage chance of winning a match at any particular score. Trailing 5-4 in a match to 7 points, your chances are 41 per cent; leading 10-3 in a match to 15, they are 83 per cent. Three players, Robertie, Woolsey and Kleinman, derived tables based on a mixture of mathematical theory and empirical evidence. Their three tables, however, had some differences. Over the years methods have become refined and the empirical evidence of real matches has greatly increased, so there is now general agreement on the table values.

The problem is, how do you remember tables? A table for a 15-point match has 225 entries, a little too many to remember. Luckily help is at hand. I shall give two methods by which the match equity for any score in any length match can be calculated.

The first, and most commonly used, is the Janowski Formula, derived by Rick Janowski of Rochdale. If D is the difference between the two players' scores and T is the number of points the trailing player needs to win, then the match-winning probability of the leading player is  $50 + (D \times 85)/(T+6)$ . If the Crawford game is being played this changes to <

# The torch carriers

**M**ilton Keynes is not the obvious place to look for exotic flowers or musical geniuses. Its flat, concrete landscape, the dismal corporate architecture that flanks its soul-destroying motorways, its pointless roundabouts... really, the 10-minute drive to the village of Wavendon, even with my chatty Indian taxi driver, is enough to lower one's spirits to a groan. But then you turn into the village with its sweet church, and think, *Maybe this isn't too bad after all.* Down a lane past the Leather Bottel pub, you find a driveway, then a handsome Victorian house, its religious provenance suggested by the symbol of a bishop's mitre carved in the stone entrance. Through the trees, you can make out the Wavendon Stables Theatre, where the musical events get produced, but you can't concentrate on that now. All you're aware of is that you're on the threshold of Cleo Laine's kingdom.

Ms Laine is an icon of the Fifties generation of jazz-lovers, but her uniquely gorgeous voice has cooed and sauntered through the lives of many fortysomething rock 'n' roll fans who managed to stifle their prejudices long enough to listen to her. And when you hear her singing old Duke Ellington or Gershwin classics ("I'm Beginning to See the Light", *Porgy and Bess*) or newer songs by Sondheim and Carole King, you wonder why anyone else bothers. It's not just the famous four-

**Half Jamaican, half Middlesex and mostly from Paradise, she neither looks nor sounds like anyone else**

octave range, moving from a Barry White basso growl to a fluting, vertiginous soprano (she can hit E flat above top C, which is coloratura level); it's not just her promiscuous shifts of tempo, from achingly croony ballads (like "Creole Love Call") to prancingly dippant, scatting *tours-de-force* like "Birdsong", in which her voice accompanies the frantic racing line of a jazz guitar as it stiched on to it. It's another quality that's always alive in her singing, a kind of regal amusement, a cooing *fatale* superiority. Half Jamaican, half Middlesex and mostly from Paradise, she neither looks nor sounds like anyone else.

But look where she comes. Ms Laine does not mind that I'm half an hour late - true Bohemians do not concern themselves with mere matters of time, only timing. Her speaking voice is a slight shock - a perfect *EastEnders* demotic, with undertones of muck and malt whisky. She leads me through the hallway of the Old Rectory - about the size of Milton Keynes station, only with more chairs - to her inner sanctum, a living room into which you could comfortably fit the Centre Court at Wimbledon, with a grand piano, a table crammed with magazines, a lot of glass cases and an air of indolent luxury. Ms Laine in person is short and plump, in a grey jacket with an expensive silver bee on her lapel. But all you really register is her colossal head, with its famous frizz of crimped ringlets, her fatuously brown eyes and her huge mouth, a fleshy capuccino splash outlined in brown lip-pen-

**'My wife is an ironing genius, an incredible ironer. Completely missed her vocation. I've never seen such ironing'**

cil like a sexy tide-mark. It crosses your mind that kissing Ms Laine, now or 40 years ago, must be an extraordinarily intense, enveloping experience.

John Dankworth appears. Ms Laine's husband of 39 years (and musical Sven-gali for rather more) is wearing a cool, black patterned shirt like a genial fascist, his long grey hair tied in a rakish ponytail. He is a card and a charmer - wayward when she is sensible, pedantic when she is nostalgic, an indulgent but not uncritical consort to this uncompromising diva. He talks with exquisite cod-formality and likes to deliver *ad hoc* lectures. In the space of an hour, I learned about the



**John Walsh**  
meets  
**Cleo Laine**  
and **John**  
**Dankworth**

compositional ticks of whoever wrote "Tea for Two", about microwave ovens, Shakespeare's sonnets, Malcolm Arnold's reputation and what ought to be played in the Millennium Dome.

"We're very undomesticated now, since the children buzzed off," said Cleo. "But John has never really needed me to iron or cook for him." "Let's say I've never *expected* any ironing from her," said Dankworth with a sigh. "My wife is an ironing genius, an *incredible* ironer. Completely missed her vocation. She never burns anything. Never double-creases anything. I've never seen such ironing..." Cleo smiled at this mystifying riff. Although she has been made a Dame of the British Empire, she has not, she says, installed a butler, footmen and parlourmaids to do her imperious bidding. She and John have two secretaries, who screen the phone-calls, make the tea and fend off Dankworth's twinkly charm. "Happily, someone comes in to do the

into my not-very-bright head that Hitler, if he came over, wouldn't like me, because I wasn't Aryan. I wondered where to hide myself if he did come to get me..."

Dankworth grew up in the East End, his mother and sister enthusiastic pianists, his father a singer. A career in the classical repertoire lay waiting for him. Then, with his first earnings from a paper round, he bought his first record, a 78 rpm double burst of Billie Holiday and Duke Ellington. "After that I bought nothing but Duke Ellington records. He was just street ahead of everyone at the time." His parents sent him to the Royal Academy of Music. "It was a last-ditch attempt to stop the rot. They said, 'If you want to play this awful jazz stuff, you'd better go and learn an instrument properly.' His real training came while playing gigs across the Atlantic on the Queen Mary with a band composed of friends equally besotted with Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker. Every two weeks for a year, they "played awful Micky Mouse dance music on the voyage, then spent two days in New York, going around buying reeds and mouthpieces for our instruments, and ties for our friends, and shirts and suits, and spent afternoons, evenings and nights in nightclubs, listening to the greats".

Since they married in 1958, their lives have been a square-dance of concerts, tours, trips, encounters and misunderstandings with everyone who ever sang or played a decent note. The Dankworth archives are full of photos of Cleo 'n' John with their arms round the great and famous - Frank, Sammy, Kirk, John Williams, Chick Corea, Dudley Moore (who was in John's band in the late Fifties), James Galway, Sondheim. Ms Laine's heroine is Ella Fitzgerald, who told her she admired her legs in 1939, and sent her a note when she won a Grammy award, saying "Congratulations, girl, it's about time".

They are currently in the midst of a protracted and gruelling tour. Last night they were in Scarborough. "It hasn't changed at all," said Ms Laine. "We sat on the promenade and looked at the people. I looked at the way they were dressed and thought, If you took a photo now, and compared it with one taken in the Thirties, it'd be hard to tell them apart." Next stop is Toronto, then New York, then New Zealand and Hong Kong. A score of transatlantic dates hence, they'll be appearing together at the Proms on 29 August. What will they be performing? "Come on Dankworth," said Cleo (her habitual mode of address to her life partner). "You're the musical director..." But beyond a expressing a whim to do some stuff from their bestselling *Shakespeare and All That Jazz* album, they haven't a clue about the playlist. "We're jazz musicians," said Cleo shortly. "You can't expect us to do everything by the book".

No indeed. According to the book, jazz singers don't divert abruptly from their career path to become leading ladies in experimental theatre, as Cleo did at the Royal Court in the Fifties, under Tony Richardson and George Devine. She was required less for her acting skills than for her status as an authentic black girl with presence and beauty. Dankworth also kept a foothold in the smart avant-garde world, writing the music for, amongst other movies, Joseph Losey's *The Servant*, scripted by a hero of the new wave. "Yeah, I wrote a song with Harold Pinter," he said proudly. "In *The Servant*, though, it wasn't much of a song. The first line is, 'Leave it alone, it's all gone'...".

We were quite friendly at the time, and I said to him, that could be a very good song, can you make it a standard lyric? And he just said, 'No, no, I don't see any reason to change it.' And he never did." Did I mention that they will both turn 70 this autumn? I asked how they kept touring, at an age when most hard-living singer-musicians would be canted over plastic trays in the dayroom of some anonymous nursing home. Did they have a special health regimen? "I have been, from time to time, a fanatic about exercise," said Cleo, "and I still do it, though not to the same degree. I don't smoke. I don't eat meat. Since I'm working almost



**John and Cleo: He is wayward when she is sensible, pedantic when she is nostalgic**

PHOTO: DOUG MCKENZIE

every day, I don't need to exercise the vocal cords. Sleep is the most important thing for a singer." Could she still stay up to the small hours, drinking the band under the table? "Oh I go to bed around 3am most nights," she said. "I'm a night bird." Soundings boards? "Every head's got them - in the chest, in the jaw, in the bone structure, all the little places here and there [she indi-

ed] in lots of ways. She's much more sensible and practical than I am." "I'm just a typical wife," said Cleo. "But we both have our moments. We can be sensible, then start behaving like a five-year-old." "More a seven-year-old," said John. "We keep each other on our toes," said Cleo, ignoring him.

**'All I can say is, if she's a dame, I'm proud to be Buttons. Or is that to do with Widow Twankey?'**

The last question is about her new status as a Dame. After a lifetime of plaudits, awards, recognition, fame and the friendship of the great, would it change her? Cleo considered it, raising her queenly head. "My daughter asked me that the other day. I told her, 'It might make me a little more... assertive'. You should have seen her face." "It'll make a nice change," said John, "from the wimpy, negative person she was before." Cleo delivered her best barnard laugh: "So hard done by..." she said, through giggles. "All I can say is," said her husband, "if she's a Dame, I'm proud to be Buttons. Or am I thinking of Widow Twankey?"

cated the pouches of her cheeks] where you can find a way of singing either a higher note, or a better note or a clearer note. A lot of people don't bother using them. I know singers in America who say they have all the top notes but didn't want to use them because they weren't fashionable. Until they heard me, that is..."

That voice of yours, I said, had it actually improved by hanging out in jazz clubs all these years? She looked at me.

"*Improved*?" Dankworth diplomatically stepped in. "It always makes jazz people bristle," he explained, "that idea that you can't have a jazz club without smoke. In New York now, jazz clubs are almost devoid of smoke." "I wish they were in blinking Europe," said Cleo with feeling. "Cos I simply hate it." Extraordinary to hear such a thing from the queen of torch singers, a woman whose voice has most regularly been described as "smoky". "Either that or 'coffee-coloured'," said Dankworth.

Was it true that she could sing only one

octave when Dankworth got to work on her? "I guess I'm a natural contralto. That's where my real voice lies." There was a

silence. "Perhaps you mean *les*, my dear," said John. "That's where my voice is," said

every day, I don't need to exercise the vocal cords. Sleep is the most important thing for a singer." Could she still stay up to the small hours, drinking the band under the table? "Oh I go to bed around 3am most nights," she said. "I'm a night bird." Soundings boards? "Every head's got them - in the chest, in the jaw, in the bone structure, all the little places here and there [she indi-

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GERAINT LEWIS



## It's only rock 'n' roll

... to the cynical British but, to the Israeli teen idol Aviv Geffen, three chords and the truth are all you need to right the wrongs of the world. James Rampton talks to an exile on Acacia Avenue

**H**is bleary eyes concealed behind tinted glasses, the unshaven Israeli musician Aviv Geffen emerges shakily from a transit van. It is midday, and he is wearing a military-style blue jacket with epaulettes and a row of medals. At the door of the run-down north London recording studio he leans against a tattered poster advertising a Fleetwood Mac tribute band and mumbles something about not feeling up to our interview yet. Instead, he has a quick caffeine-and-cigarette fix before staggering into the studio with his equally dishevelled band. Then he straps on his axe-hero's Rickenbacker and launches into a full-decibel, head-down, no-nonsense, mindless boogie jamming session to blow away the cobwebs. Just your average rock star, then.

Well, no, actually. Geffen is far from your average rock star. How many rock stars do you know who have been stoned off stage by Jewish fundamentalists, attacked by knifemen posing as fans, and subjected to so many death threats that they have to wear a bullet-proof vest and employ a phalanx of bodyguards for public appearances? As if that weren't enough, the vociferously anti-establishment Geffen has also been denounced by the Israeli President and was obliged to quit his homeland for his own safety and pursue his career in Britain. He is a genuine example of that over-used phrase, "the protest singer", living breathing proof that pop and politics are joined at the hip – least in Israel.

Geffen is cooling off in a cafe over the road from the studio after the sweaty, high-kicking, arms-winding jam. Diminutive, with dark good looks enhanced by mascara and a purple shirt open to the midriff, there is more than a touch of the Artist Formerly Known as Prince about him. A serious man who seems old before his time, he sighs that "it's impossible to avoid politics in art. There is a peace element to everything I write. I feel inspired by it. Every song is one of my screams. I don't want to sing 'the sky is blue' – that would be boring. It's hard to be happy in Israel. We don't have one day where everything is just normal, where you just lie on the grass and nothing happens. You open the paper and things just jump out at you face."

Geffen omits to mention that several of these headlines have in fact been caused by him. For many of his fellow countrymen, he is a walking provocation. In the past couple of years, he has enraged bullish hardliners with a series of red-rag pronouncements. After the election victory of the Likud Party, he advised young people to "pack your bags and flee Israel". His subsequent description of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as an "empty, hollow-hearted man" was scarcely calculated to endear him to the authorities, either.

He went on to fan the flames of right-wing outrage when he said that: "The Wall of Pink Floyd means more to me than the Western Wall. I don't believe in stones. I believe in human beings." His refusal to be conscripted, his fierce criticism of the Israeli military, and his support for Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, gays, cross-dressers, women and animals merely push him further beyond the pale for Israeli traditionalists. Unsurprisingly, fundamentalists have depicted Geffen as the Devil.

But to the followers of his Israeli youth movement, known as "The Tears Rebellion", he is anything but.

In their eyes, Geffen is one figure who can achieve the seemingly impossible: melding the trivia of pop with the very grave business of politics. Israel's biggest-selling artist, Geffen can boast five platinum albums and concerts that sell out many times over. Teenagers hold nightly vigils outside his former flat in Tel Aviv (he is now domiciled in north London) and daub his lyrics in graffiti across the city. The fact that Israeli government ministers have urged parents to prohibit their children from listening to Geffen's records has merely boosted his street cred. We're talking serious, disaffected-youth rock god here.

His iconic status was further bolstered in November 1995 when he played at the rally for peace in front of 300,000 on the main square in Tel Aviv. There he became the last person to embrace Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and bid him "Shalom" (peace), a mere 10 minutes before he was gunned down by the fanatical Yigal Amir. "I'm just 24, and I came face to face with death."

tions," he declares. "The Bible belongs to me as well as to them. They're afraid of me because I teach the youth and bring them to a new understanding. I don't want Israel to become like the Third World, like Iran. For the fanatically religious, I've become a symbol of modern Israel, someone who wears make-up and a dress and they don't like it. They prefer macho types. I'm holding the flag for weakness. Let's cry and write about the tears."

His language is littered with such phrases, apparently lifted straight from the *Dictionary of Rock Star Clicks*. If you can get beyond that, however, there is no doubt Geffen's bravery. "I don't give a shit about the death threats," he claims. "It's a price I'm prepared to pay. I'd prefer to die with the truth than live with the lies. My weapon is my pen. I believe in a God of love, and my opponents believe in a God of blood. When they start to shoot in the name of God, it's very dangerous and ugly. If I don't agree with someone, I never throw stones at them. I'll fight

**"I'd prefer to die with the truth than live with the lies. My weapon is my pen"**

Geffen says, still sounding shocked at the memory. "With three bullets, Amir killed both a very brave man and the peace."

Rabbi Schmuel Boteach, who describes himself as "in the camp of the Israeli right", speaks for many in voicing scepticism about the so-called "voice of a generation". Geffen's statement that he'd give up Israeli land is, he believes, naive. It forgets that the Jews are the most persecuted nation on earth. Throughout history, the majority were exploited or slaughtered. So for someone like Aviv to say that land is unimportant is to be ignorant of all Jewish history. It's like saying 'take my home'. Where are you going to live then? On the street and die from the elements? Jews deserve a country of their own. That's why Aviv is eliciting the ire of the older generation. They feel he's undermining their sacrifice. Jews must rely on themselves for protection. If they gave away land, they'd elicit the contempt of the world. Creating peace between Palestinians and Jews is an admirable goal, but not at the expense of civil war.

"His comments about the Army upset people,

for their right to speak their minds against me, but the same must apply to me. I don't want to shut up. Never, never. It's my country, too. I have every right to speak my mind. If I stopped singing because of them, they'd have won." Stirring stuff.

For all that, Geffen is the first to admit that his actual music – tuneful, if unadventurous, guitar-driven rock anthems – is caught in a time-warp. After all, his country's rock heritage thus far amounts to two Eurovision Song Contest victories in the 1970s. "From an English point of view, our music can seem very tacky," he concedes, "because we're stuck in the 1980s. Israel has been culturally isolated, and we have to take steps to catch up. I'm very hippy – peace and love, man. I may seem like an idiot, but on the other hand it's refreshing. I'm a reaction against the cynicism of English music."

Continuing in this uncynical vein, Geffen passionately states that his songs "can change things. I'm doing now what Bob Dylan did in the 1960s – fighting for peaceful ends. Israel now is like the US was in the 1960s." Like his other hero, John

**"If I stopped, I'd disappoint my critics. They'd have no one to complain about. They'd be bored"**

too," Boteach continues. "There's hardly a family in Israel that hasn't lost a member. It's an insult to all those who have sacrificed their lives. And for Aviv to say that 'The Wall' means more to him than the Western Wall is offensive. To randomly fire off words offensive to religion is grossly immoral. Aviv's comments are incredibly simplistic. You need more complex solutions to complex situations. He has great vision, but it is not necessarily tied to reality."

In response, Geffen tries to explain why he has so upset the Israeli religious community. "Because I have an open mind and I'm always asking ques-

The times they are a-changing: but Aviv Geffen (left) still recognises the power of a song

Lennon, he asserts that "we've got to give peace a chance. It's a very short life. On any day, a Russian politician could drink too much vodka, press the nuclear button and everything would explode. You have to live for the day."

He may sound naive to jaded, media-savvy British ears, but Geffen undeniably appeals to a younger generation in Israel, sick to the back teeth of conflict. "Yitzhak Rabin gave me the baton of peace," he concludes, grandly. "Now I have to give it to the youth. Anyway, if I stopped, I'd disappoint my critics. They'd have no one to complain about. They'd be bored."

**Aviv Geffen plays at the Borderline, London, WC2 (0171-734 2095) on 4 Aug**

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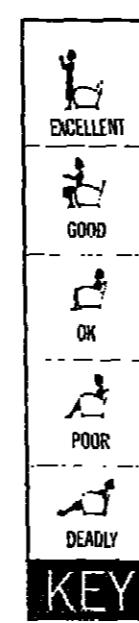
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WEEK IN  
REVIEW

overview

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### THE PROM Missa Solemnis

The 103rd season of the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts presented by the BBC opened with Bernard Haitink conducting Karita Mattila, Catherine Wyn-Rogers, Herbert Lippert, Anthony Michaels-Moore, the BBC Symphony Orchestra and chorus in Beethoven's choral masterpiece, *Missa Solemnis*.

Stephen Johnson saluted the technical security and intellectual conviction but "the earth failed to move; theingle-o-meter hardly twirled." "Performing it is itself a test of faith ... one that Bernard Haitink not merely endured but surmounted," trumpeted the *Telegraph*. "A performance that shook the rafters, exhilarated the senses and stirred the soul ... What is it about this concert series that lifts the best musicians to superstar levels of endeavour?" wondered *The Times*. "Deeply felt ... the kind of fighting spirit we want to start the series," affirmed the *FT*. "A series and missed opportunity that (the performance) was only half-strength ... A concert unsure of its aim," the *Standard*. "Began well enough," burbled *The Spectator*.

Continuing at the Royal Albert Hall (0171-589 8212) and live on Radio 3 (plus next day repeats) until 13 Sept.

A good start to another year of this unique event. With 66 concerts still to go and tickets from £3, can you afford to miss this?

### THE PLAY Suzanna Andler

Julie Christie stars as a wealthy wife caught between her womanising husband and her first lover in a play by Marguerite Duras, designed by Johan Engels and directed by Lindy Davies, whose *Old Times* with Christie was startlingly successful. With Julie Legrand and Robert Hickson.

Paul Taylor was unmoved by Christie's "eye-swivel responses worthy of Miss Babes in *Acorn Antiques* ... You'd get more gripping drama from watching your fridge defrost." "Duras, alas, is not famous for her jokes ... rather like a French version of an Anita Brookner novel," gaged the *FT*. "It is not that the play has dated, particularly with the passing decades, it's just that every scene takes decades to pass," growled the *Telegraph*. "Christie radiates a very English, distric nurse common sense ... a decided misfire," opined *The Guardian*. "Duras's barking, menopausal play," snorted *The Express*. "No doubt its class, especially when as physically elegant and emotionally fine an actress as Christie is in control," allowed *The Times*.

At the Minerva Studio, Chichester (01243-781312) to 9 Aug.

For die-hard Christie fans only. To see her at her best, rent the video of *Don't Look Now* instead.

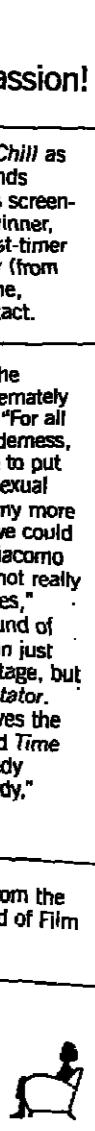
### THE FILM Love! Valour! Compassion!

A gay *Friends* meets *The Big Chill* as eight guys spend three weekends together in Terrence McNally's screenplay of his Broadway award-winner, filmed by its stage director, first-timer Joe Mantello. Jason Alexander (from *Seinfeld*) replaces Nathan Lane, otherwise the cast remains intact.

Adam Mars-Jones winced at the sentimentality. "Characters alternately bitch, reminisce and wallow." "For all the film's flashes of wit or tenderness, there are enough irritants here to put you back up, whatever your sexual stripe," sneered *The Times*. "Any more artfully ravishing pathos and we could expect the next visitor to be Giacomo Puccini," scoffed the *FT*. "It's not really life we're watching, it's lifestyles," sniped the *Standard*. "The sound of theatre talking to itself. You can just about get away with that on stage, but not on film," argued *The Spectator*. "Unexpectedly stinging ... leaves the neck-hairs standing," approved *Time Out*. "Moves easily from comedy through drama into near tragedy," nodded *The Guardian*.

Cert 15 (a pleasant surprise from the less than pro-gay British Board of Film Classification), 114 mins

More a case of Love! Valour! Compassion! *The Boys in the Band* goes Nineties.



of the World:  
woman astronaut  
a man  
and all that

10th-15th

"A

bunch of bastards." Such language, applied (even unattributably) to a client company by one of the top brass at a recent meeting of the Scottish Arts Council, is shocking enough, but what came next is worse. Not only has Scottish Ballet, the object of that anonymous vituperation, been refused lottery money from the SAC to fund the new Christmas production that was meant to help build a strong future for the company, but the Council has been recommended besides to withdraw its grant altogether. If implemented, the cut would mean the death of the company. But Scottish Ballet will not go down without a fight, and yesterday announced a campaign to rally support.

Letter-writing to MPs and to Scotland's arts minister Sam Garside, lobbying a petition and a fighting fund are all part of the strategy. As the company's marketing director Lucy Shorrocks declares, "We will not be pulling any punches. We will not allow Scottish Ballet to go to the wall."

Scottish Ballet is not just any old company. Founded nearly 30 years ago by the then Arts Council of Great Britain, it met a need that had been voiced for decades before that. Peter Darrell, its first director and choreographer, had one of the liveliest and most original minds in British dance. Bringing with him (from Bristol via Sadler's Wells) a team - administrator, dancers and staff - used to working together, he quickly set a policy that has lasted. The repertory was to combine classics and new works; the creations were often adventurously conceived, the revivals sometimes of less familiar ballets, and always in treatments carefully adapted to the company's capabilities. There was as much Scottish content as possible in choreography, music and subject matter; and, to develop Scottish dancers, a school was started which, aided by Glasgow City Council, has become a focal point for dance teaching in Scotland. Another major factor was a determination to serve the whole of the country, travelling nationwide to small towns and villages as well as big cities.

On top of becoming a truly national company, Scottish Ballet has always been internationally successful too. Judge its dance standards by the fact that Margot Fonteyn, Natalia Makarova and Rudolf Nureyev were only the most famous of many stars delighted to come as guests. Scottish Ballet is also the only British dance company to have had a whole series of productions by the most sought-after of European choreographers, Jiri Kylian. Tours have taken it to America, Australia, Canada, China, France, Hong Kong, Japan (where it sold more tickets than the Bolshoi Ballet), Korea, Malaysia, Spain, Russia (where it became the first foreign company ever to perform in Moscow's Kremlin Palace) and the Ukraine.

So what went wrong? First, as calculated by the Scottish Arts Council's own client review, Scottish Ballet was underfunded to the extent of £185,000 in 1995 and progressively more since then. But the vitally needed funds were not forthcoming because the SAC simply did not have the money. That deficiency limited what could be done in the way of new productions, despite good box-office returns and surprisingly resilient sponsorship. Besides, there has always been a faction within the SAC (as indeed there is further south too) that finds ballet, for all its audience popularity, outmoded and would prefer a small modern-dance company. This despite the fact that Britain's best modern com-

# He who pays the piper...

The Scottish Arts Council started out trying to cut the number of Scottish orchestras. It's ended up trying to cut Scottish Ballet as well. John Percival begs them all to think again

pany, Rambert Dance, can only half-fill Edinburgh's Festival Theatre for four nights at a time, whereas Scottish Ballet plays there for two weeks a season, and to good houses.

The final straw was the problem of the orchestras. As long ago as 1991, it became apparent that Scotland had more than it could afford, especially as Scottish Opera's large full-time orchestra was

If Scottish Ballet were to disappear, not just the dancers, staff and musicians would be out of work, but Scotland's reputation would suffer in the eyes of millions worldwide

so clearly under-used. Various merger proposals over the years all fell through. Finally, a scheme was put forward for Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra all to share resources. The theory was that this would generate savings, while an overall increase in government funding for the arts in Scotland was promised too.

But Scottish Ballet not unreasonably wondered why, during the 18 months of negotiations, details

of the supposed savings were never produced. All they could see, in fact, was an obligation for them to pay £300,000 a year more - as their contribution to a large full-time orchestra - than their present frugal part-time orchestra costs, and no firm commitment from anyone for help towards the bill. What board, in their right minds, could agree?

The Musicians' Union, as it happens, backs the

Ballet's view. Dennis Scard, the MU general secretary, told me this week that they had also asked in vain for proper figures. When these were not forthcoming, they did their own calculations and found that "it didn't add up". That was confirmed, according to Scottish Ballet's general manager David Williams, when eventually the figures for the merger scheme were produced and "the savings were just not there".

But the Scottish Office and the SAC had made

up their minds. They exhorted the companies to make "a leap of faith". The others, with nothing to lose, agreed; Scottish Ballet, without anything firmer than vague murmurings about likely sources from which to meet the increased costs, said it could not do so. At this point, according to the SAC, the Ballet withdrew from the negotiations; company's chairman, Oona Ivory, however, insists that they did not walk out. "We knew how that would be represented. We went only because we were told to leave."

She would still like to sit down and talk to find a solution. "The last thing I want is to have some kind of acrimonious dispute with the Scottish Arts Council," she told me. "We need to get round a table and put our needs across."

Scottish Ballet has a seven-year artistic plan prepared by its artistic director Galina Samsova. According to Oona Ivory, when it was put to the SAC's dance committee, she asked every member in turn whether they endorsed it, and every one said yes. "Yet our artistic ambitions are continually frustrated. This is a vigorous but small nation; it deserves the very best in ballet, opera, theatre and music."

If Scottish Ballet were to disappear, not just the

dancers, staff and musicians would be out of work. The Dance School of Scotland depends on its relationship with the company. Audiences would be deprived of programmes they enjoy, and theatres left with gaps in their schedules (just when increased facilities are being provided through the Lottery). Scottish trade would lose the impetus, contacts and publicity that Scottish Ballet's overseas tours have repeatedly provided. And Scotland's reputation would suffer in the eyes of millions worldwide.

I rang the Scottish Arts Council earlier this week and asked what they were doing to help save a company that was both a major artistic asset to the country and an important source of economic benefit too. The answer I received was that "A decision will be made in August, when the Council meets. It would not be useful to speculate before then." Not good enough: they should be working to avoid what would surely be seen in Scotland and outside as a national disaster and a disgrace. That is the message which Scottish Ballet's campaign must now get over to the SAC, the politicians and the whole country.

A Scotsman on the make or break? A scene from Scottish Ballet's tartan-clad 'Sylphide'

## Teen dreams of a musical wunderkind

PROMS Opera North Royal Albert Hall, London / BBC Radio 3

If I remember rightly, adolescent sexual imaginings balance very precisely between licentious, not to say lewd fantasy, and the most chaste idealisation of the object of sexual desire. For most of us, it remains fantasy, abiding or not, but Erich Wolfgang Korngold, the 'Wonder Boy' of German music in the years around the First World War, had the talent to turn it into opera. Mind you, with Puccini and Strauss (both admirers of Korngold's prodigious talent) dominating European stages, the young man had plenty of models for his febrile musico-dramatic style. His one-act opera *Violanta*, written in 1914 when Korngold was 17, lives and breathes the slightly fey air of late Late Romanticism. Strings shudder and shimmer, the brass heaves and pants, their fevers fanned by the harp, and by the piano placed at the heart of the orchestra. And then there are the voices, out-Straussing Strauss with the clash of heart-tugging lyricism and terrifying high notes. Hans Müller's *Albrecht* sets the action in 15th-century Venice, an exotic location to add to the hothouse atmosphere. A woman vows revenge on her sister's seducer, but then falls for him herself, finally sacrificing herself on her husband's dagger.

Overblown? Of course, but it's easy to get carried along on the emotional surge. Opera North's Proms presentation on Thursday was first billed as being semi-staged but, in the event, it was a concert performance, with only the merest hint of interplay to denote dramatic action. With no surtitles to help out, the audience had to follow the story by way of the translation in the programme, a task made trickier by singing that often blurred both vowels and consonants.

Nick Kimberley

## It's political certainly, but is it correct?

INSTALLATION ARTS Relocating the Remains Royal College of Art, London; Fat Cow Tannery Gallery, London

What it feels like to be black and what it feels like to be fat: hands-on experiences offered by two installation artists in shows that opened at the Royal College of Art and at the Tannery Gallery (in Bermondsey Street, south London) this month.

Confronted by the interactive CD-Rom game *Caught Like a Nigger in Cyberspace* and with an electronic mouse as a trigger, you know have to shoot the black man jiggling about within the superimposed gunshots in order to enter the scenario. With an all-black gallery staff watching you, it can be embarrassing - whether you are white or black.

*Cyberspace* is one of three CD-Rom / video works by the 36-year-old black British artist, Keith Piper, curated at the RCA by the Institute of International Video Arts.

Much of the impact of this 15-year mid-career retrospective, *Relocating the Remains*, comes from his use of stunningly brilliant digital technology as a medium for issue-led art.

In his video collage, *Unrecorded History*, a big screen shows hands turning the pages of the log book of a slave ship as the plan of a deck cargo of slaves drifts eerily across the background and the good ship *Jesus*, the first slaver, sets sail for Africa. The viewer, hand to mouse, is ensconced at a polished mahogany office desk lit by a brass lamp, as the images swirl and blend within a decorative gilt frame - posh objects redolent of dominant white culture. There is a soundtrack of sad negro songs.

But to return to the "nigger" lost in cyberspace: if you shoot straight, you will be rewarded with "a welcome beneath the silicon sun for you and your family" (a young white mom, pop and baby zoom out, grinning) and an opportunity to apply for entry by choosing the user profile that best describes you. The correct (as in PC) click-on choice is either the nerdy Tech-Head or Other, a black silhouette. But the *successful* choice is the Al Gore Lookalike. It's witty.

"Others" are invited to abandon their application to trespass in cyberspace (very nasty, more opportunities to shoot the black man), or are told, "Wait until we are ready to see you" - the caption to a roomful of empty chairs. Click on the "I'm off" spot or wait for ever.

My clicks kept sending me back to the same feisty blonde receptionist and her



The New Frontier

A WELCOME BENEATH THE SILICON SUN FOR YOU & YOUR FAMILY

Thank you for visiting cyberspace. Have a nice day: Keith Piper's CD-Rom

message: "Thank you for visiting Cyber space. Have a nice day." Piper told me afterwards: "I think she's rather pleasant."

He gets his astonishing effects from a humble Apple Macintosh £200 that cost him £1,200 two years ago and the software packages Photoshop and After Effects.

CD-Rom / video art is about as little known in this country as black art. Piper and Sonia Boyce, Britain's leading black artists, are seldom reviewed outside the art press. As for Britain's white electronic artists, only Simon Roberts has gained mainstream acclaim, for his sequences of a rotting cow at the Natural History Museum.

Final embarrassment at the hands of Piper: his electronic exploration of black masculinity in *Negrophilia*, on a small screen right beside the RCA's reception desk. My first few clicks located a black man in flagrant with a white woman (cue soundtracks of female gasps), then the white female cliché. "To you I was always just a body," captioning an image of a black female nude. I made an excuse and clicked "Exit".

As an experience of identity, Gill Oliver's *Fat Cow* installation, one of the exhibits that had a four-day run in "Sight Unseen" at the Tannery Gallery earlier this month, was not much easier.

There were no electronics, but usherettes aided viewers in making a quick-click choice between two entry doors marked "Not thin" and "Not fat", rubber-stamping

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IT IS...ARE YOU?

John Windsor

# Getting in a state

We must make Europe work, says Denis MacShane

*The Question of Europe* edited by Peter Gowan and Perry Anderson, Verso, £40 hb/£15 pb

**H**ine complained that while the British had the sea, and the French and Russians the land, the Germans were undisputed masters of dreams. How boots move on to other feet. The view of Britain as empirical and pragmatic in contrast to the constitutional logic-chopping Continentals now needs revision. Germany, France and other European nations plod quietly forward in the search for integration and co-operation in Europe. The devolved, separated centres of power across the Channel make the European process a tortuous compromise.

What a contrast with the Anglo-Saxon world, as this excellent collection of essays shows. Here are *vierundzwanzig Professoren* dancing on the head of a pin, proving to their own delight the impossibility and inevitability of Europe almost in the same paragraph. The centralisation of the European debate in recent years in the hothouse salons of SW1 and the City gave rise to a feverish Euroscepticism. On May Day, the voters reduced the heat with a rational rejection of Euroscepticism. But the dreaming and idea-spinning go on.

In a sense, we are all Eurosceptics now. With enlightened detachment, we seek a reason for Europe rather than put blind faith in any pronouncement from Brussels or Strasbourg. We can now see that, far from being a federal superstate steaming its way over popular will, Europe is fragile and insecure. The absence of statesmanship in the Nineties leaves it ready to break up into disgruntled nations and blocks with competing monetary policies, and labour markets. A Hobbesian Europe of all against all is more likely than dreams (or nightmares) of federalism and diktats from Brussels.

Harold Macmillan knew who to blame for Europe. It was "the Jews, the Planners and the old cosmopolitan element", he said. In much of present-day Tory discourse against Europe, one senses the old Adam of hate against the protocols of the elders of Brussels. Can the new government decouple Britain from the obsessive navel-gazing about Europe among our intelligentsia, press and the Euro-hostile BBC? A good start has been made, but the failure over four decades to explain Europe may cost us dear.

There are plenty of ideas and arguments in this collection, which brings together many essays published in journals. They include some surprises. Who would have expected Edward Luttwak, not long ago the high priest of Reagan anti-Communism, to be a closet Jospinist, pleading for spending and demand to create jobs? Guy Standing, Britain's best labour-market statistician, now exiled in Geneva, offers the subversive thought that if the contribution of the black economy is included in official figures, the Maastricht criteria cease to be a problem.

The most sophisticated defence of the political economy of EMU comes from Sam Aaronovitch. It is written in academic prose but bears working through. If Aaronovitch could only convey his important analysis in the flippant, *nouveau*-tabloid style of his namesake David, the new governing élite would have a guide worth following. The editors, Peter Gowan and Perry Anderson, are standard-bearers of the old New Left, but have included discussions by conservatives such as John Keegan, English Christian Democrats such as Tim Garton Ash and that gloomy Spenglerian, Conor Cruise O'Brien.

Trying to fit the classical templates of political science or constitutional theory over Europe is impossible. European construction is a process, not an end, and it remains the most fascinating political game in town. Get Europe wrong and you pay a heavy price; ask the Tories. Get Europe right, and a great deal of what needs to be done in our own mini-federation – of three-and-a-half nations, five or six religions, stuttering regional economies, and a mosaic of cultures and ethnicities – will fall into place.



Footnotes to history: (left) frightened children flee from Belfast during the Irish Civil War in 1922; and (below) Emilio Zapata 'at large' in Mexico

HULTON GETTY



# A chronicle waste of time

Too many facts and not enough biographical detail, sex or gossip make history a dull subject, argues Frank McLynn

*A History of the Twentieth Century, volume one 1900-1933* by Martin Gilbert, HarperCollins, £30

**A**s the success of Simon Schama's *Citizens* and Orlando Figes's recent history of the Russian revolution demonstrates, narrative history is enjoying a sustained revival. The key to success is an artful and judicious mixture of narrative and analysis. Orlando Figes's book, which Gilbert draws on substantially in the sections on Russia, provided the correct recipe: some socio-economic analysis but not too much, layered with fascinating biographical details, human interest stories, sexuality and even gossip. But Gilbert's penny-plain, "just the facts, ma'am" history will surely appeal only to historical Grandmamas. Apart from a brief overview of the causes of the First World War, there is almost no analysis and even the anecdotes have a *Reader's Digest* "curious facts" feel about them.

Gilbert has elected to follow a strictly year-by-year sequence in his history, which largely reduces his book to the status of a chronological dictionary of dates, and the inevitable absurdities of this genre are not avoided. An entry for 1901 sets the tone: "Painting flourished: Paul Gauguin, Edward Munch and Pablo Picasso produced major canvases that year." These are all well-known artists, and perhaps it is unfair to carp at the jejune banality of the sentence. But what about the following, under year 1910: "Emilio Zapata challenged the rule of President Diaz ... During a revolt of government troops in Mexico City, Diaz was overthrown and replaced as president by Francisco Madero. Zapata remained at large." As a cap-

ture description of the Mexican Revolution this is ludicrous. Since Madero came to power with Zapata's help, why should not the latter "remain at large"? And this is all we get on the origins of the Mexican cataclysm, one of the most shattering revolutionary events of the century. Later, under the year 1914, we are told that with General Huerta's downfall, Mexico returned to a "less dictatorial regime". In fact it returned to no regime at all, but a 12-month period of anarchy and chaos. And in any case, to take judicial notice, Diaz, Zapata, Madero, who they? The reader surely needs more guidance than this.

In general, the sections on Latin America are weak.

There is nothing about the disastrous Chaco war between Bolivia and Paraguay which broke out in 1932

and claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. The sections on the internal history of the United States are also poor, in contrast to the full treatment meted out to Russia and the Soviet Union. Even in the realm of British history, where Gilbert is generally reliable, there are some curious gaps. Surely the year 1919

should have carried some mention of the only police strike in this island's history? And the nasty Irish Civil War of 1922 becomes simply: "There were also many assassinations in Ireland in 1922." Churchill, predictably from this author, receives his due and more than his due. His disastrous stance on India is sanitised, so that we hear of his condemnation of General Dyer and the 1919 Amritsar massacre but not of his description of Gandhi as a "half-naked fakir", nor this on the subcontinent in general: "I hate Indians. They are a beastly people with a beastly religion."

Gilbert devotes much of his space to war, foreign affairs and international relations, but most of his insights are confined to the surface. There is an unacceptably anodyne description of the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922, when the Americans forced the British to abandon their treaty with Japan and obliged Japan to accept the 5.5:3 ratio of capital warships, with Japan humiliatingly receiving the third slot. The British were duped into abandoning the Japanese on the understanding that as a *quid pro quo* Washington

would write off a substantial part of London's war debt; but once the Americans got what they wanted, they forgot about the agreement. There is a good story here, involving subsequent Anglo-American tensions which nearly led to war in 1928, but the reader will find none of it in Gilbert's one-dimensional account.

There is some curious lore of the "amazing facts" in this book, and a very good potted history of aviation from the Wright brothers onward. But technology, whether in the wider or narrower senses, is sketchily dealt with. In another of Gilbert's isolated sentences, which receives no further explanation, we read: "The year 1930 also saw the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Standard Oil Company." Those who already know the details of John D Rockefeller's career will not need to be told this; those who don't will simply be baffled. Amazingly, in the index Rockefeller is listed separately from Standard Oil.

General histories of the 20th century are not impossible to write, but they must be informed by a mission to explain or at the very least point of view. Eric Hobsbawm's brilliant survey of the "short 20th century" shows what can be done by a great historian with his imaginative and analytical powers at white heat. A book like this, which is really an encyclopaedic compendium of raw facts, is likely to leave the average reader scratching his head. I suppose modern *Rip Van Winkle*, fresh from a 100-year nap, could glean some useful information from this book, but it is hard to see who else could benefit.

# Philosophy of the Euro-sausage

It's got Disneyland, intellectuals, English 'pubs' and Schopenhauer: Harry Pearson is confused by a two-tier Europe of the mind

*Continental Drifts: travels in the new Europe* by Nicholas Fraser, Secker and Warburg, £15.99. *Travels as a Brussels Scout* by Nick Middleton, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £17.99

**P**erhaps it is something to do with English lack of self-confidence, but during a recent spell in Europe I found myself increasingly obsessed with what other nationalists thought Britain was like. Since these days most people's ideas about the rest of the world are gathered through their TV screens, I spent a lot of time flicking channels in hotel rooms looking for programmes about this country. There were lots of them. Unfortunately, most were made in the United Kingdom and dubbed or subtitled for local consumption. The selection itself was instructive, however. The British programmes the European broadcasters had chosen fell into two broad categories which we might call "Come quickly, Inspector! It's Sir Edward. He's dead", and "Whoooooah! Yeah! Rock 'n' roll!"

The styles never overlapped. Not once, for example, did the shaven-headed singer from Skunk Anansie leap out from behind a golden retriever and scare the living daylights out of Inspector Adam Dalglash. The bumbling, suburban Sergeant Lewis was likewise absent from the sexy Eternal videos.

Such obvious contradictions are often the basis of our unthought-out judgements of other nations. So, Britain is simultaneously hidebound and hip; Sweden is dull and sex-crazed; Belgium boring and overrun with serial killers, and so on. We live in a two-tier Europe of the mind.

Further proof of this admittedly rather scanty thesis comes with the publication of a pair of entertaining travel books, both of which look at modern Europe. Authors Nicholas Fraser and Nick Middleton often tread the same ground, but rarely find the same things. When Middleton goes to Paris, for instance, he visits Disneyland and gets drunk in a string of "English" pubs. When Fraser goes to Paris he chats with the next generation of Eurocrats at the élite *École Nationale d'Administration* and interviews Bernard Henri Levy.

As you might gauge from this, Nicholas Fraser's is the more serious work; an attempt to define what being a European means as we approach the (I'm sorry to have to use this word, but there's really no alternative) millennium. Fraser is extremely erudite, and at times his journey seems as much intellectual as physical – Baudrillard to Yeats as

well as Banjul to Yarmouth. The result is always interesting, the quotations apt and illuminating, although perhaps a problem arises from Fraser's relentlessly impeccable taste. Great artists have a universality. This is good for humanity, not so good for travel writers. Low culture tends to reflect current national fears and prejudices in a way that high culture often does not. When he is in Sarajevo, for example, Fraser expresses disbelief at the view that France is worried by the thought of an Islamic state in the heart of Europe. A glance at any French bookshelf, however, would have turned up the works of Enki Bilal, one of France's most popular and acclaimed graphic novelists. Bilal (born in Belgrade but brought up in Paris) sets his work in a future Europe ripped apart by a terrorist war between Christian and Moslem factions. The fear, however, is real.

The omission is surprising since Fraser is particularly good on France. The section dealing with Parisian intellectual life is both entertaining and provocative, a complicated and truthful mix of admiration and scepticism. On the one hand we have the brave and humane Camus, on the other Sartre cynically babbling. "A revolutionary regime must dispose of a certain number of individuals which threaten it, and I can see no other means of accomplishing this than death." The only consolation for which is that after recent events in Cambodia, Jean-Paul and Pol Pot are now able to enjoy a cosy fireside chat together while Ceausescu roasts chestnuts for them.

While Fraser's prose sometimes mimics the lucid, slippery style of the modern French philosophers he approvingly quotes, Nick Middleton writes with straightforward and relentless good humour. At times, when mere jauiness replaces the jokes, he can sound a bit like one of those round robin letters that arrive at Christmas from people you are sure you are related to but can't quite figure out how. Thankfully this rarely happens. He is good on quirky detail (in the TGV he notices that the mirrored ceiling allows you to watch other passengers picking their noses upside down) and a nice turn of phrase (a Dane has "fingers so thick they looked like a handful of thumbs"). Middleton is less knowledgeable than Fraser about literature (He confuses the nationality of the fictional Inspector Maigret with that of his Belgian creator, Georges Simenon, for example) but knows considerably more about breakfasts. If you read both books you may come away with the impression that Europe is part Schopenhauer, part sausages. Which is probably as near the truth as anything else.



European cafe society: an entertaining mix of low and high culture

## Coming and going

Men have one-night stands; women have babies. That's evolution, says Gail Vines

*Why Is Sex Fun? the evolution of human sexuality by Jared Diamond, Weidenfeld, £11.99*

The title of this small but perfectly formed text is eye-catching, but a bit of a con. Jared Diamond doesn't even mention orgasms. You won't find anything here about the evolution of sexual pleasure, in all its extraordinary variety.

Like most sociobiologists, Diamond is chiefly interested in the "norm" - the middle-class American couple with two children and the occasional affair on the side. He starts from the perspective of the family dog: Diamond's mission is to explain why our species goes in for "recreational sex", when lots of other animals only spend any time on sex when there's a good chance of making babies.

His general argument will be familiar to a generation raised on Richard Dawkins' *Selfish Gene*. Men like sex because they are programmed to spread their genes around. Women are more wary, afraid of ending up pregnant and single. But women have recreational sex with their partners in an often vain attempt to try to hang on to them.

In Diamond's world view, the battle of the sexes is hard-wired: a conflict of genetic interest is the "cruel fact" of life. In this storyline, women get left holding the baby because their biology forces them to invest more in their offspring than the male does. While his partner is pregnant, a man can easily produce enough sperm to fertilise every one of the world's two billion reproductively mature women. "That's the evolutionary logic that induces so many men to desert a woman immediately after impregnating her and to move on to the next woman," concludes Diamond.

One-night stands would be the norm, Diamond opines, were human babies not such a handful. Women need help rearing children, as Diamond, father of twins, knows only too well. So women have evolved sexual strategies to keep the men interested. They give no overt sign of fertile periods - the phenomenon of "concealed ovulation".

But if men are evolutionarily primed to stick around, albeit reluctantly, why don't they do something useful, like helping with the breast-feeding? The recent discovery, in Malaysia, of male fruit bats nursing their offspring, shows that lactation is not a physiological impossibility for male mammals. Diamond raises the question, but doesn't really have an answer, other than to conclude simply that it must not be in a man's genetic interest to do so, given that the woman will do the job, and that the babies might not be his anyway. Bizarrely, he suggests that expectant fathers might contemplate having "some combination of manual nipple stimulation and hormone injections" to activate their latent ability to lactate, once they have had their "confidence in paternity buttressed by DNA testing".

At times, Diamond's arguments have more than a passing resemblance to just-so stories: it is possible to dream up an evolutionary explanation for just about anything. OK, so the human penis is several inches bigger than a gorilla's or an orang-utan's. But is the human appendage really so big as to constitute a handicap to its owner, comparable to a peacock's tail? Diamond argues that the penis is a costly and exaggerated "signal of virility", because it consumes valuable tissue that could otherwise form extra brain cells. "In effect, a man is boasting, 'I'm already so smart and superior that I don't need to devote more ounces of protoplasm to my brain, but I can instead afford the handicap of packing the ounces uselessly into my penis.'

The only thing stopping its continued expansion is the unfortunate need to fit into a woman's vagina, says Diamond. You wonder why he doesn't propose a comparable drive towards ever bigger vaginas. After all, he tells us, "every woman knows" that she must "compete intensely" with other women to get "one of the few high-quality men", who will presumably be well-hung.

*Why Is Sex Fun?* is an excellent introduction to the conceptual world of contemporary sociobiology. With his usual verve and style, Diamond ransacks anthropology and field biology alike to find examples that suit his purposes.

He recounts the self-seeking exploits of big-game hunters among the Ache people of Paraguay, and delights in the massive penis sheaths of New Guinea tribesmen. He tells us about the philandering of the male pied flycatcher, and the sexual tyranny of female phalaropes - shore birds in which the larger female pursues the male, who ends up tending the eggs while she pisses off to look for another sucker.

After reading Diamond's book, I'm still not sure why sex is fun, though I can certainly see why sociobiology is. But whether this approach provides profound or even useful insights into the human condition is quite another matter.

Why can't a woman astronaut be more like a man? Because NASA/TREK won't let her, laments Marina Benjamin, and that's the trouble with ...

## the space girls

*NASA/TREK: popular science and sex in America* by Constance Penley, Verso, £11

I suspect that the Pathfinder mission to Mars has sent X philes everywhere into a tail-spin. The problem is this: how do you sustain belief in a conspiracy theory which casts Nasa chiefs as sinister machinators bent on covering up their knowledge of the truth out there, when they have been exposed for all the world to see as geeks who delight in nothing more than an ability to drive robots by remote control? Granted, the scientific imagination needs only the barest of factual foundations on which to build its fantasies; the science-fiction imagination even less. But the most determined X phile will have trouble impugning dark purposes to a buggy that spends hours examining a rock and would lose a race with a snail. That Nasa has scored a point against *The X-Files* in the space fantasy

league will not be lost on the agency. Aware of its own metaphoric potential, and of the ease with which that potential may be manipulated, it has for years sought to align itself with the Utopian quests and avowed internationalism of *Star Trek*. From dubbing its Mission control computers Scotty and Uhura and naming the first shuttle Enterprise to scattering *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry's ashes in space, Nasa has consistently modelled itself on

In the late Seventies, it even recruited actress Nichelle Nichols (Lieutenant Uhura) to help encourage women and ethnic minorities into its astronaut corps. The ploy worked: Mae Jemison, who in 1992 became the first African-American woman in space, cited Uhura as her inspiration. From such evidence, Constance Penley convincingly argues for the existence of a single symbolic entity: "Nasa/Trek". She contends that "Star Trek is the theory, Nasa the practice". It's

a bold thesis. Alas, Penley takes it in only one direction: Nasa/Trek's ambivalence towards the role of women in space.

Never mind the degrees in physics and medicine, the flying hours notched up piloting jet aircraft, or the years of intensive training: above all else, Nasa needs women in space to be good mothers, competent teachers and nurturers of men. On the ground, they must play down their extraordinariness, writing books for children, and talking to journalists about their emotional investments in inner space rather than their scientific experiments in outer space.

Crucially, had Nasa not been so insistent on the absolute ordinariness of Christa McAuliffe - the teacher in space blown to smithereens in the *Challenger* disaster in 1986 - it might have salvaged its public reputation. As it was, McAuliffe's apple-pie make-over left the entire American nation thinking, "it could have been me".

In the midst of exploring various fictional subversions of the standard narrative of women in space, Penley stumbles into a space as strange in its own way as the interstellar void: the underground world of "slash" fiction. This pornographic literature, written on home computers and distributed by mail order, makes explicit the homoerotic relationship between Kirk and Spock that many believe was the hidden subtext of the original *Star Trek* series. Its aims are Utopian. In between bouts of sex, the plots involve the space crusaders on a mission to save the world.

But they are Utopian in their sexual dimension as well, expressing equality through homosexuality and interracial harmony in the love between man and Vulcan. The real warp-factor, however, is that slash fiction is produced not by gay men but by straight women Trekkies who would like to have seen Lt Uhura give Captain Kirk a run for his money.



Hanging about on the 'Star Trek' set: Captain Kirk and Lt Uhura (top) are up against an alien concept, while (below, left and right) members of the Enterprise crew act according to their sex

PHOTOGRAPHS: PICTORIAL PRESS

## Your DNA's in the mosquito

Creating a modern dinosaur the 'Jurassic Park' way would be impossible, writes John Gribbin

Perfectly timed both for the launch of the second *Jurassic Park* movie and for the season of beach reading, *The Science of Jurassic Park and the Lost World Or, How to Build a Dinosaur* by Rob DeSalle and David Lindley, HarperCollins, £12.99

amber for tens of millions of years. This unauthorised look at the science that would be involved belies its subtitle by showing that it would not be possible to build a dinosaur in this way.

But that isn't the point; the point is to poke gentle fun at the excesses of the movie-makers, while doing out a lot of real science in an accessible, easily assimilated form.

Those movies, in case you have been in a coma during most of this decade, are based on the premise that it would be possible to reconstruct a dinosaur (indeed, several different species of dinosaur) from the DNA in dinosaur blood in the stomach of a mosquito that has been trapped in

including DNA sequences from ordinary, present-day species (rather than real dinosaurs) in the "scientific" descriptions in the movies is a delight, and I particularly enjoyed the analysis of the inadequacies of the islands on which the movies are based as homes for these creatures. The calculation of how many goats would be needed to feed the beasts, how they would be shipped to the island, and how much pasture the goats would need while waiting to be fed to the dinosaurs is reminiscent of the classic description of the mountaineering expedition in *The Ascent of Mount Everest*, and leads to the conclusion that the ideal base for *Jurassic Park* would in fact be Martinique - but taking over "a French department already occupied by the resort homes of millionaires" is, as the authors point out, not on the cards. "Islands are hard to come by these days."

This is a fun, but informative, book, that will introduce a lot of people to

some real science. But don't let it spoil your enjoyment of the movies, which operate on a different level. After all, your enjoyment of *Superman* does not depend on whether or not you really do believe that a man can fly.

Tyrannosaurus rex and the diplodocus: a starring, if inaccurate, role in Hollywood movies

